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The Week

IF THE Roosevelt administration has been waiting for a clear-cut issue with which to test the validity of Section 7a in the courts, it now has that issue in the case of the Houde Engineering Company of Buffalo. The facts are simple: A few weeks ago the National Labor Relations Board ruled that "the only interpretation of Section 7a which can give effect to its purpose" is "that the representatives of the majority should constitute the exclusive agency for collective bargaining with the employer." Accordingly, it ordered the Houde Company to recognize the independent union, to which the majority of the company's employees belong. The company, however, has now declared that it does not intend to abide by the decision but will continue to follow the earlier interpretations of Section 7a, made by General Johnson and Donald Richberg and incorporated in the President's settlement of the automobile dispute. These do not require the recognition of a specific union and permit the employer, moreover, to deal with his workers on a "proportional representation" basis—company unions to be represented along with independent unions.

CLEARLY, the Houde case goes to the heart of Section 7a. For if employers are not forced to recognize the principle of majority rule, then collective bargaining is meaningless. As the case now stands, however, the Houde company can hardly be accused of "violating" Section 7a. It is merely observing the interpretation that seems most favorable from its point of view. For the ruling of the Labor Board, though certainly the only adequate and realistic interpretation of what collective bargaining means, has no more legal force at the moment than the opinions of General Johnson. Realizing this, the National Association of Manufacturers has advised its members to ignore the Houde decision and to continue, unperturbed, with their "proportional representation" schemes—"until competent judicial authority has declared otherwise." Thus it is highly imperative that the Department of Justice should begin immediate prosecution of the Houde company and speed the case to the Supreme Court. Only in this way can labor be assured that Section 7a means what it says. And only in this way can the Roosevelt administration—after failing to press such a test case for more than a year—convince labor that it was sincere in the promise it wrote into the Recovery Act. The Houde company's Blue Eagle has been removed, but obviously this is not enough. A genuine showdown should be had.

IF ANY important lessons are to be drawn from last week's state elections, we do not know what they are. Mr. Roosevelt's popularity is probably declining, but the results of this drift are not yet visible in the returns. The Democrats are greatly pleased with their thumping victory in Maine, though there is no evidence either that it constituted a vindication of the New Deal or that, as the Republicans charged, it was "bought" by the distribution of relief funds. In non-presidential years, state elections are usually determined by state issues, and hinge largely upon the personalities of candidates. In Louisiana Huey Long's victory is significant chiefly because his was a battle between the

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radio and the press, in which the latter received a crushing defeat. No one ventures to predict that the Democrats will lose control of Congress in November; and there is no reliable evidence that the attitude of the country as a whole has greatly changed since the Literary Digest poll a few months ago. It is still as sure that Mr. Roosevelt has the mass of the people behind him as it is that he will finally lose their support if he continues his present middle-of-the-road course.

THERE is a Communist uprising and not a textile strike in Rhode Island," Governor Theodore Francis Green warned the Rhode Island Assembly last week, adding that "We must put the Communists down here as they were put down in San Francisco when the longshoremen went on strike." Fortunately, Governor Green's attempt to become another Governor Merriam was not wholly successful. He was able to call out the National Guard, which subsequently killed two youthful pickets and wounded many others in Saylesville, but his Red hysteria failed to stampede the Assembly. It denied his request for dictatorial powers to suppress the strike and withheld from him the authority to call in federal troops for that purpose. To expect any factual proof from Governor Green to justify his inflammatory remarks toward the strikers would be, of course, to expect too much. The formula in labor disputes, as everyone must know by now, is to blame the Communists first and investigate afterward.

AS TO the Governor's fears, however, it is interesting to note that on the same day that he saw the state capitol in imminent danger of capture by the Communists, The Daily Worker, official organ of the party, was grieved to find that precisely the opposite was the case. In a caustic editorial, the paper severely censured the Providence section of the party for its lackadaisical part in the strike. With 50,000 workers out, it found that the party organizers had ordered only 300 copies of The Daily Worker for distribution among the strikers. Worse than that, a reporter from the paper, paying an unexpected visit to the Providence office of the party, discovered that not even these 300 copies had been distributed. Said The Daily Worker editorially:

> We do not ask impossible deeds of our party units. We do not demand that they lead every struggle. . . . Our forces in Providence are weak and politically immature. . . . Our criticism of the Providence comrades is precisely that they did not even TRY to carry out the easiest possible task in giving leadership to the militant Saylesville fighters, namely to see that The Daily Worker was placed in their hands.

So much for Governor Green's Red scare. Meanwhile, the Rhode Island strikers are holding their ranks in impressive fashion. On Saturday and Sunday, 20,000 turned out in Central Falls and Providence for the mass funerals of the two boys slain during the week by the National Guard.

BEYOND misstatement and deliberate falsification of the issues of the textile strike, there is another objection to General Johnson's speech at Carnegie Hall in New York City on September 14. Through Governor Winant's board, appointed by the President, the government has already taken a role in the strike, that of impartial arbiter. The case is before the court, yet Johnson, an officer of the reputedly impartial government, finds the moment opportune for a violent, provocative, though most carefully considered, anti-labor speech. After describing the June 2 agreement between the union and the manufacturers, he denounced the strike as an "absolute violation of that understanding," despite the fact, which Mr. Gorman promptly pointed out, that the agreement stated that it was "without prejudice to the right to strike." About the effectiveness of the June 2 agreement Johnson had nothing to say; he merely assumed that everyone would understand that it had been broken by labor; nothing about violation of code minima, stretch-out, nothing about neglect of wage differentials—one of the prime abuses leading to the strike—on which the report, called for by the June agreement, has not yet even been made. The impropriety of injecting himself into this dispute is accentuated by the falsities he chooses to spread about it.

AMONG the minor mysteries of General Johnson's speech is his attempt to drag in the name of Mr. Justice Brandeis as one of the intellectual fathers of the present variety of what Lewis Corey calls Niraism. To hear the General tell it, the distinguished Justice has been his spiritual mentor all through his stormy recent past. But everyone who has read Justice Brandeis' public utterances knows that he is very far from sharing General Johnson's views. Washington observers, moreover, refuse to credit the idea that the two men have had more than the slightest possible personal contact during the past year. Can it be that the doughty General has been misled by some imposter, misrepresenting himself to be the Justice and then misrepresenting the latter's views?

ONE of the happenings of the week which we cannot pretend to understand is the action of Dean Roscoe Pound, of Harvard Law School, in accepting an honorary degree from the University of Berlin. Even were the present German government not what it is—a barbarian horde with which no lover of liberty and justice anywhere in the world should strike hands—its attitude toward the law would, we should have thought, have been sufficient to alienate a man in Dean Pound's position. No one in modern history has done so much as Herr Hitler to place justice under the heel of politics. The only real law in Germany today is the law of whip, rifle and block. Dean Pound's action will be interpreted by German propagandists around the world as an answer to Nazi critics. It is no answer; it is only a fresh riddle.

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DISTURBING reports are in circulation that Lloyd Garrison may shortly resign his position as head of the National Labor Relations Board and return to the University of Wisconsin. We trust these rumors may prove to be false. Mr. Garrison's work, in his brief term with the Board, has been so distinguished that he is obviously a hundred times more useful in Washington than he could possibly be in Wisconsin. He is the first man in official position who has shown a realistic understanding of labor problems and, at a time when important labor policies are in the making, his forthright capabilities are of inestimable value.

ONE of the handsomest pieces of printing we have seen in a long time is a booklet praising the Columbia Broadcasting System, produced, oddly enough, by the Columbia Broadcasting System itself—and who should know, if it doesn't? This booklet points out that Columbia is on the air sixteen hours a day and that 70 percent of its broadcasting is non-commercial. It gives a long list of Columbia's work in 1933 in the fields of education for children and adults, civic welfare, religion, national and foreign events, news, serious and light music, drama and sports. Columbia "prefers not to duplicate or compete with the work of the university, laboratory, lecture platform or the classroom, but rather to supplement these"—whatever that means. This report, with its list of distinguished names of speakers, musicians and other performers, is ever so impressive; but even more impressive is an article in Variety for July 17, telling what time for the coming autumn and winter Columbia had sold up to that date. During the all-important hours of eight to ten-thirty P. M., every moment has been sold for six evenings a week, except a total of about an hour and a half a week. Columbia's listeners are to have the ineffable pleasure of hearing programs sponsored by Ex-Lax (a laxative) for thirty minutes; Feenamint (a laxative) for thirty minutes; Castoria, one hour and fifteen minutes; Jad Salts, thirty minutes; Bi-So-Dol, thirty minutes, and the rest of their time is to be devoted to shaving creams, cigarettes, soap, automobiles, radio sets, cigars, milk, magazines and soup. It looks like a busy, educational winter.

HOW much money do charity balls and similar undertakings turn over to the specified beneficiaries? Frankly, we do not know, and we are willing to assume that the following story represents a highly exceptional case. A beach club on Long Island is reported to have staged a performance for the benefit of four charities. The admission charge was $7.50. Total receipts amounted to $1,882.50, and $1,866.62 was expended for dinner, music, entertainment and decorations. This left $15.88 for the four charities. The club seems to have added a small sur to this magnificent total, divided it and sent $5.22 to St. Joseph's Hospital, Far Rockaway. However, the head of the hospital declined the offered money—on the ground that a young lady who impersonated Joan of Arc in the pageant, appeared in a bathing suit.

IF RIDICULE could kill, Adolf Hitler's prophecy at the National Socialist Party congress at Nuremberg of a thousand years of Nazi rule would have laughed Germany's dictator out of office. But the humorlessness of latter-day Germany has been one of its great tragedies. Instead the German press, under the gentle ministrations of its ruler Goebbels, overflows with enthusiastic commentaries on the Führer's prophecy. They must have exceeded even that gentleman's expectations. In the Third Reich, personal sycophancy and political stupidity go hand in hand. In this respect the Nuremberg performance exceeded all previous demonstrations of Nazi debasement. Hitler assured 2,000 woman politicians of his party that the preoccupation of their sex with political problems is a "product of Jewish intellectualism," and was rewarded with boisterous applause. Enthusiasm rose to still greater heights when he declared that "the Nazi program for women has but one point: the child."

THERE was more fancy than fact, however, in his declaration that the Storm Troopers are "regarded by me as the main buttress of the Third Reich." The practical measures adopted by the Führer and his lieutenants against the Brown Shirt troopers on this occasion told another—and truer—story. "Though the Storm Troops were given a good position in the huge stadium," reports William Shirer, Universal Service correspondent, "Hitler's own bodyguard of Black Shirts was drawn up in front of the rostrum separating him from the mass of Brown Shirts." The much discussed appointment of a new Vice-Chancellor and of an heir-presumptive to Hitler's throne in the event of the Chancellor's incapacity or death, has not yet materialized, showing that the fight for supremacy among Hitler's aides is not yet decided. Disappointment awaits those, also, who were credulous enough to hope for a change in the party's policy on the Jewish and trade-union questions. Hitler cannot afford to sacrifice these important stage props in the Nazi scenery lest he lose his still widespread popularity among the younger element and the thoughtless masses.

THE stupidity of the peace dictators of Versailles, who cut off from the mother country for a period of twenty years a district almost exclusively German, is now bearing fruit. Under normal conditions the population of the Saar, more than 50-percent Catholic, would not have supported a National Socialist regime. Nevertheless, it will vote with a large majority for a return to Germany next January 13, simply as an act of fundamental national justice. Yet it might, perhaps, have been possible to win a majority for a postponed decision and the temporary retention of League control had the

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French possessed the wisdom to abstain from a propaganda that consistently played into Hitler's hands. Nothing less than madness can excuse the latest tour de force, the announcement that France will, in the event of a decision favorable to Germany, return the Saar mines only if Germany pays for them in toto and in cash. The Versailles Treaty, it will be recalled, places upon the German government the obligation to repurchase the Saar mines should the Saar vote to return to the Reich at the end of twenty years. After Germany's callous refusal to live up to her financial obligations one cannot blame France for insisting on adequate security for the hundred million dollars involved in the repurchase transaction. But under existing conditions, the French declaration was an open provocation of hostility in the Saar, since everyone knows that Germany is in no position to meet the terms. On the other hand, French management of these mines under a German National Socialist regime would of necessity lead to friction. Europe would face the ever present danger of a Franco-German explosion that would rally the German people to Hitler's banners, one that France would find it difficult to explain to the world. Hitler and his aides would probably welcome a fight for the Saar as the easiest way out of the deadlock of their present desperate economic plight. That is a possibility Paris and Geneva should not overlook.

The Meaning of the Textile Strike

THE TEXTILE strike is a "struggle to the death" for textile manufacturers, for the union and for the Roosevelt administration, but there is grave danger (or great hope, depending on your point of view) that it will end in a draw leaving all the combatants still in the field. No other conclusion can be reached from an analysis of the real forces underlying the thrilling upswing of the textile workers so skillfully handled, up to the moment of writing, by the United Textile Workers of America under Francis Gorman's leadership.

Let us point out first an important, though not the major, element in the situation. The N.R.A. was supposed to equalize competition between Northern and Southern cotton manufacturers, or in silk between Paterson and Pennsylvania, by stabilizing wages. In the early stages, last summer, something was accomplished in this direction. There was a decided upswing in textile business, rising prices, etc. The elimination of child labor, cutting down hours uniformly, pegging minimum-wage rates, did a good deal to produce stabilization, or at least the semblance of it. But as months have passed and there has been a chance to see how the new set-up works under "normal" rather than "boom" conditions, it has become clear that the Southern cotton manufacturers, and in similar fashion the Pennsylvania silk employers, have retained their competitive advantage. They have done so by two methods, by keeping down or cutting down the wages of all the better paid workers, and by the stretch-out. Northern textile manufacturers could not utilize these devices to anything like the same extent because of the generally higher wage level in all Northern industries and the more advanced stage of unionization among their workers. Thus the old fight among the manufacturers is on again. The general strike came in textiles rather than in some other industry partly because in the former there is this large group of Northern manufacturers who cannot altogether regret the strike, and who may in fact indirectly have abetted it. They must have some relief if they are to continue in business. Pressure from union organization and labor revolt in the South is one of the ways by which they may get it. Since they must deal with the union anyway, they cannot grieve too deeply that their Southern competitors should acquire precisely the same headache.

It seems clear, however, that the Roosevelt administration is not going to provide, and fight for, a clear-cut answer to the problem. That would mean a genuine "planned economy" for cotton textiles, a cartel under the most rigid government supervision (if not government ownership), production quotas and so on. The administration has put itself in a position where it cannot cope successfully at this time with the forces among the textile and other industrialists opposed to such a drastic step. On the other hand, it cannot let the Southern employers have their way completely, which would be the certain outcome of a thorough defeat of the union.

An appraisal of some of the other elements in the situation will make this latter clear. There is a serious crisis over the issue of union recognition under the New Deal. The workers demand the clear-cut right to organize and they are in a fighting mood about it, as Toledo, Minneapolis, Milwaukee, San Francisco and now the textile strike have demonstrated. Employers are lining up their battalions. The Roosevelt administration is certain to compromise, and particularly on the eve of a critical election.

Suppose the strike were to end in a complete victory for the workers. That would mean that the United Textile Workers would gain nationwide recognition from the employers, with a 33-percent increase in minimum wage rates, and a 25-percent reduction in hours, to thirty a week. Such a victory would inevitably be the signal for a showdown on union recognition and the thirty-hour week in steel, automobiles and all down the line, with inevitable strikes in these industries unless the employers should yield without any struggle at all. Victory in these basic industries would give organized labor power that would put it in a position to dictate to industry and to the Roosevelt administration. Will the latter permit this to happen? Will the indus-

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trialists stop short of anything to prevent it? The notion is fantastic.

On the other hand, let the union suffer a thorough defeat in this strike and what is the position? Reactionary industrial and financial interests would have tasted the blood of the N.I.R.A. The American Liberty League would run wild. The New Deal would be dead. A union-busting campaign would be on. The workers, completely disillusioned, would desert Roosevelt and swing to the left or to fascism. Does anyone in his sober senses believe that this can be allowed to happen at this juncture, that even the more responsible and intelligent conservatives in the country would permit it to happen just now? Again a fantastic notion.

Even comparative novices in dealing with industrial disputes, however, know that frequently a strike must happen, a test of strength, before either the combatants or so-called neutrals really know what is the deadline beyond which they will not yield. In that sense the Roosevelt administration probably welcomed the strike. Shrewd politicians would argue thus: "Both employers and workers have to let off steam. We on our part need to know just how high the pressure is on each side, both in order to arrive at an acceptable compromise of the strike and in charting our course during the election campaign and the session of Congress. What better weathervane than a strike? But if a big strike, then much better in textiles than, for example, in automobiles, steel, coal, shipping or railroads. The economic life of the nation as a whole will not be so swiftly or deeply disturbed. The disturbances that will inevitably occur will be spread over a wide area and for the most part in smaller cities, not concentrated in the big key cities of the nation. There is a lot of public sympathy for the underpaid textile workers, the textile employers are not in the best repute and they are not the top layer of industrialists and financiers. So the strike will let off steam and ease general tension. By the time it is over, winter will be approaching and the strike wave will temporarily subside. Each side will realize that there are limits beyond which it cannot go. In the end the President will stand forth once more as the hero who saves the workers, the good employers and the nation from dire catastrophe, and he will know which way the wind is blowing."

Finally, the fate of the American Federation of Labor is so intimately tied up with that of the national administration that a compromise is probably what the Federation leaders deep down in their hearts also want. A thoroughgoing defeat for the U.T.W. in this strike would encourage reactionary employers all along the line and would seriously affect the A.F. of L.'s prestige. The U.T.W. has always been something of a step-child to the A.F. of L., however, and there is no question but that the more astute of the Federation leaders have been willing to see the strike come in textiles rather than in any one of several other industries, believing that a defeat there would not necessarily have the consequences that defeat in the steel and shopmen's strikes had in the early post-war period.

On the other hand, a complete victory could come only after a very long and bitter conflict. The unions would have to pour millions into it. There is no sign that the A.F. of L. Executive Council is planning for this or would be able to get genuine support from the heads of the Internationals if it were. The International Ladies' Garment Workers and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers have voted substantial contributions to the U.T.W. strike chest, John L. Lewis' United Mine Workers a smaller one, and that is all to date. The conference of heads of the Internationals which was to have been held in Washington last week has been postponed until the A.F. of L. convention meets in San Francisco on October 1, which certainly does not point to a consciousness that a life-and-death struggle is on.

As has already been hinted, a really complete victory for the union could only come after terrific pressure upon, probably a serious conflict with, the Roosevelt administration. The A.F. of L. leaders will hardly go to that length. A long strike of an anti-administration character would probably bring the more radical elements, though not the official Communists who are almost in eclipse, to the front. The A.F. of L. leaders would have to accept this radical leadership or find themselves in the position of the leaders of the British Trade Union Congress on the eve of calling off the 1926 General Strike. If complete victory for the union came out of the kind of struggle we are envisioning, strikes for union recognition and the thirty-hour week would follow in steel, automobiles, public utilities. This, again, would mean that for the time being the labor movement would be completely out of the hands of its present leaders. They are not likely to permit this to happen. They will string along with Roosevelt and do their utmost to make the textile leaders string along with them. Much depends, so far as this strike and the whole future of labor in this country are concerned, upon whether Francis Gorman and his colleagues do string along with the machine or follow an independent line.

The New Pattern in Europe

RUSSIA'S entry into the League is at last assured. The final difficulties were many, but pressure by France and England was effective in surmounting all of them. The formal act sets the seal of recognition upon the realignment of European politics that has been slowly emerging into view for many months.

Notwithstanding her political isolation on the Continent, it is Germany who today dictates European politics—a truth so generally accepted as to have become wearisome with repetition. It was Hitler's chancellorship that forced France and Russia first into a more or less casual understanding

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and later, as the need for closer coöperation became more urgent, into a campaign for Russia's entry into the League of Nations. The efforts of the French statesmen to obtain Russia's acceptance with a minimum of opposition were dictated by motives as selfish as those that impelled her leading wartime statesman, Georges Clemenceau, to support President Wilson's proposal for the creation of the League in 1919. The reason for approval "of the ideas of the great American President," he wrote at the time to Poincaré, "may not be important at the moment. But we ourselves must understand that tendencies we once ignored as mere utopian fantasies have since grown into powerful forces which must be kept under control."

Recent comments in the Moscow Pravda make it quite plain that the leading men of Russia foster no illusions as to the real reason for the change of front. More than Russia needs them, France, Great Britain and Italy now need Russia, which, by a vote taken in the League Council, receives a permanent seat in that body and equal status with the other Great Powers. At this moment France and her friends are anxiously mustering their forces in the effort to check the growth of a German block. With the other Great Powers of Europe firmly united against them, a German-Polish alliance is not likely to prove a grave menace to either France or Italy. Nor will it profit Germany, either politically or economically, to win Jugoslavia, Rumania or Bulgaria over to her side, for Italy, France and the Soviet Union would still have sufficient influence in the nations of the Danube to checkmate a union of Danubian and Balkan states backed solely by Germany's military power.

There is method, therefore, in the apparent madness of Poland's attempt to check the growing assertiveness of the League of Nations (at the suggestion, undoubtedly, of her newly won German friend) by bringing up the question of national minorities at this important juncture. In 1919 Poland signed guarantees that force her to observe the rights of the national minorities within her borders.

Actually, the same was true of other nations which, through their statesmen at Versailles, promised their own national minorities rights similar to those exacted from the new succession states. It was Lloyd George who, speaking in the name of the Allied and Associated Powers, declared that "in the matter of security and protection of national minorities we demand nothing of the newly created states that we ourselves are not willing to carry out and to which we are not hereby pledged." This fact does not destroy the menacing possibilities inherent in Poland's new move. Let her draw the logical conclusion from her position, and Germany will follow forthwith. She will ignore the restrictions that gave protection to the Jewish minorities in Upper Silesia, and in other countries fresh persecution will begin for Italian, Hungarian, German and Slavic minorities. Poland, which suffered so terribly under German and Tsarist domination, now offers to the world an example that will result in the same inequality for other national units. Because of the possibilities of new national resentments it holds, Poland's demand must be treated as one of the most serious of the weighty questions on the League agenda.

What Poland objects to, of course, is not so much the constraint she is forced to observe in her relations with these national minorities as the provision that gives the League of Nations the power to summon her official representatives before this international tribunal. It is not pride, but the fear that Russia, as a member of the League, may ask questions concerning Poland's treatment of the Ukrainian minority, questions Poland would find it hard to answer, that is responsible for this unexpected maneuver—that and the shrewd calculation that to deprive the League of its power to enforce the terms of such international guarantees would rob it of much of what little is left of its authority and power.

If compromise proves impossible, Poland will have to decide whether to withdraw from the League or abandon her stand about the minorities. One hesitates to believe that Warsaw, with its perennial need of financial support, will have the courage to place its sole reliance on bankrupt Germany. It is much more likely that Marshal Pilsudski, who has so often drawn the saber and equally often returned it to its scabbard, will once more order his Foreign Minister to retreat before it is too late.

Meanwhile, Germany observes the game played in Geneva with the equanimity of the outsider who stands to win when others fight. But it is doubtful whether in the end Poland's double dealing will redound to the advantage of the Nazi regime. If Poland should actually decide to renounce her military alliance with France and take her stand with Germany, the creditors of the Reich may at last take action on German refusal to pay, and resort to the sanctions they have thus far hesitated to apply. What perspectives this would open up for the peace of Europe needs no underlining here.

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EDITORS

BRUCE BLIVEN MALCOLM COWLEY R. M. LOVETT
GEORGE SOULE STARK YOUNG

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

H. N. BRAILSFORD JOHN DEWEY JOHN T. FLYNN
WALDO FRANK E. C. LINDEMAN W. P. MANGOLD
LEWIS MUMFORD GILBERT SELDES R. G. TUGWELL

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The "Morro Castle" Disaster

A SECOND-RATE crew, paid the lowest possible wages, manned the "Morro Castle." Acting Captain William F. Warms delayed the order for an SOS signal thirty minutes, thinking of salvage fees the Ward Line would have to pay if he called for help; meantime the whole superstructure of the vessel became a blazing death trap, light from the fire being visible on the Jersey shore seven miles away in spite of the rain. Of the first ninety-eight persons to escape in lifeboats, ninety-two were members of the crew. George Alagna, the second radio operator, who saved the life of the heroic first operator, George Rogers, and who risked his own life to help get out the SOS, was regarded by Captain Willmott and Ward Line officials as "an agitator . . . not to be trusted" because he had protested against low wages and bad food. Warms and other officers, advised and apparently coached by Ward Line lawyers, told almost identical stories which conflicted with the testimony of Rogers and Alagna. These are a few of the most significant facts unearthed by the "Morro Castle" board of inquiry.

With other bits of testimony, they seem to fix the major responsibility for the 136 lives lost, if they do not explain how the fire started. From the evidence unfolding day by day before Dickerson N. Hoover and the other federal steamship inspectors on the board, responsibility seems to rest jointly upon several groups. First, it rests upon the entire American merchant marine, whose consistent policy of opposition to competent organized labor has demoralized scores of ships' crews, including the pitiful collection aboard the "Morro Castle." Second, the Ward Line earned a great share of blame by pursuing this anti-labor policy with extraordinary diligence. Finally, the officers and crew of the ship, most of whom thought only of their own safety and forgot or ignored the lives of passengers entrusted to them, must also be held responsible. There were many exceptions; some of the men fought valiantly and stuck grimly to their posts. And in some instances, evidently, passengers were stubborn and unresponsive to such measures as were taken to help them. Also many passengers trapped by flames were beyond help after the first few minutes.

But most of the crew followed the inglorious example set by Chief Engineer Eben S. Abbott. This officer disregarded the inflexible law of the sea that requires an officer to take his post and command his men during an emergency. Instead, Abbott left his duties to the second and third engineers, making sure that they would let no man leave the engines "until it was not humanly possible to stay." Then he wandered about the decks on an aimless inspection tour, breathing enough smoke to put him "in very bad condition." Scarcely half an hour after the fire was discovered, Abbott was safe afloat in Number One lifeboat. Twenty-nine of the crew were with him in the boat, and two passengers.

After the first alarm, Captain Warms continued to drive the blazing "Morro Castle" at eighteen or twenty knots into a heavy northeast wind which fanned the flames and drove them rearward toward the passengers' quarters. During part of this time panic-stricken passengers at the stern were jumping into the water, and were quickly left behind to drown. At that time no distress signal had been sent, and no ship was near to pick them up. It was not necessary for these people to leap overboard so soon, and many of those who remained a little longer were rescued by the "Monarch of Bermuda" and the "Andrea F. Luckenbach." But there was no control or organization to calm the fears of passengers and tell them what to do. They looked forward and saw the entire middle portion of the ship blazing, with the wind carrying smoke and flame closer and closer to where they stood; frenzied, preferring to take their chances in the water, they clambered over the rail and pitched into the black sea. The death ship plowed onward.

Of course it is not fair for landlubbers with no knowledge of seamanship to pass judgment upon Acting Captain Warms. The sudden responsibilities thrust upon him were so conflicting and terrible they stagger the imagination. But veteran ship masters in present command of ships on the New York waterfront are perhaps qualified to judge. And they damn him unmercifully, with even greater wrath and more picturesque language than an aroused public and a semi-hysterical press. Warms chose to drop anchor finally, rather than attempt to beach the ship on the Jersey coast. Other masters are divided on the wisdom of this decision.

Radio Operator Rogers' testimony regarding the SOS signal amazed listeners at the hearing. He stated that during the desperate half-hour between 2:50 and 3.20 A. M. when he was trying to maintain failing radio equipment and stay alive long enough to carry out orders for an SOS, no such orders came from Warms. Alagna acted as messenger from the radio room to the bridge, fighting his way through dense smoke and past swiftly spreading flames. After the first trip Alagna reported, "They're running around on the bridge and I can't get any coöperation." Just then Rogers heard the "Andrea F. Luckenbach" calling the shore radio station at Tuckerton, New Jersey, asking for information about a large liner burning off the coast. *The "Andrea F. Luckenbach," several miles away, could see the fire, but no order for a distress signal had yet come from the bridge on the doomed ship.*

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Rogers sent a CQ message (stand by for emergency call) on his own initiative. Again Alagna went to the bridge, and this time, after further precious minutes, he obtained an order from Warms, but only after telling the captain, "The chief operator is dying, and if you don't send a message now it will be too late to send any." Alagna stumbled back, reaching the radio room about 3:23. "Okay, chief," he said, "send out the SOS." Rogers, almost unconscious, managed to flash the signal on the emergency transmitter just before it failed. Every other radio instrument had gone out of action by this time, including the emergency receiver; the corner of the radio room that housed batteries for the receiver exploded from the intense heat as Rogers began sending the "Morro Castle's" last call. When the message had gone out Alagna dragged Rogers out on deck and away from the choking smoke. But this he did only after making another hurried trip to the bridge to ask Warms's permission to abandon the radio room, where furniture had been burning for ten or fifteen minutes.

This is both Rogers' and Alagna's story. It differs from the captain's testimony in several details. Warms declared that he gave explicit orders for an SOS at 3:20 without being urged by the second operator, though he admitted that he had not thought before of sending a radio message. "I thought we could hold it," he said, after describing the fury of the blaze and the reasons why it could not be confined to the writing room and lounge. Radio logs of shore stations bear out Rogers' statements to the minute.

Alagna is the man Captain Willmott described as "an agitator and troublemaker. . . . I wouldn't trust him farther than you could throw a steel safe." Two months before, Alagna and another radio officer, since discharged, tried to persuade their fellow officers to join a protest against the food served them aboard the "Morro Castle." They enlisted no recruits in their crusade, but went on strike just as the ship was ready to sail from New York on one of her regular weekly cruises. The sailing was postponed for two hours until Ward Line officials signed a special agreement guaranteeing the two men better food and more wages.

Alagna was slated for dismissal as soon as the "Morro Castle" reached New York on her last trip. He knew it and was cheerful about it, according to Charles Maki, the young third operator. Maki was on duty when the fire broke out. He routed Rogers and Alagna from their bunks shortly before three o'clock. He testified that Alagna was sleeping soundly, and could not have left his quarters earlier without waking Rogers, a very light sleeper.

On three occasions Alagna has been questioned for several hours by the federal grand jury, which under United States Attorney Martin Conboy is making a separate investigation to discover whether possible grounds exist for charges of criminal negligence. The radio operator was arrested as a material witness and held in default of $2,000 bail, later raised to $3,000. Every New York newspaper and others throughout the country printed photographs of Alagna handcuffed to a deputy marshal. Later he was freed from custody. United States Marshal Raymond J. Mulligan said the deputy had made "a mistake" in handcuffing a civil prisoner held solely as a government witness.

Rogers told the inquiry board about Alagna's difficulties with Captain Willmott, after Warms and other deck officers had sworn there was no friction or labor trouble aboard ship. The chief operator was very reluctant to give this portion of his testimony. "I'm afraid," he said, "the whole thing is going to be misinterpreted."

"I am not trying to trap you," said Mr. Hoover.

Rogers paused a full minute, then replied, "You aren't trying to trap me, sir; you are trying to trap somebody else."

"Somebody else" meant Alagna. Reporters received hints from several sources that Alagna's "radical" background would and should be played up. So far, that angle has produced no conclusive results; the statements of Alagna and Rogers seem much more plausible than those of the men on the bridge. Alagna's release and the apology for the handcuff "mistake" indicate a retreat from the Red case that was being built against him.

Chief Electrician Floyd Justis also contributed to the evidence that the "Morro Castle" crew was not "one happy family," as Warms had declared.

"On all ships there is friction and trouble, and last year we had plenty of it on the 'Morro Castle.' If you didn't have the proper drag, you didn't know when you were going to lose your job. Because of this condition, half the ship, and me, too, believe that if it wasn't through spite that the fire was started, there was plenty of friction."

Further questioning of Justis along this line was seemingly intended to persuade him to retract his implications. "Isn't that true in all walks of life?" asked Hoover, referring to disagreements and friction. "Probably even in the clergy?"

Earlier in the investigation, Mr. Hoover was asked if his decision to ask a separate inquiry by the Department of Justice was prompted by reports of incendiarism. His retort was brief and extremely interesting to those who have watched the Red-scare publicity mount during the inquiry: "Communism and incendiarism are the same."

"Morro Castle" seamen, surrounded by Ward Line lawyers and worried by the prospect of unemployment, have said little publicly about their working hours, wages, food and living quarters. The steamship inspectors have carefully avoided asking questions about these matters during the hearings. That is understandable. As The New Republic pointed out last week, it is the duty of these inspectors to enforce the navigation laws. Many sections of the laws define in unmistakable language the rights and working conditions of various grades of seamen. If the men sitting on the inquiry board were to discover that the laws have

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been continuously violated, they would automatically prove themselves guilty of lax enforcement.

Any seafaring man along South Street will tell you the Ward Line's reputation for wretched treatment of labor. Disorder, unpreparedness and sub-zero morale aboard the "Morro Castle" were the logical result of heedless and stupid mismanagement ashore. The crew forgot the traditions of the sea because they had no reason to remember. No man working for these employers could be expected to feel any genuine loyalty to his ship or to the company.

The activity of the Ward Line attorneys throughout the hearings has provided a remarkable spectacle. No bevy of ambulance chasers could display more watchfulness and energy. Two of them—Stanley Wright and Chauncey Clark—were seated beside each member of the crew as he testified. All witnesses from the crew, except Alagna, have conferred at length with the Ward Line counsel before taking the stand. Many of these attorneys even accompanied the seamen to the grand-jury anteroom, where the crew waited to testify before Conboy's inquiry. Finally the ship owners' legal lights swarmed about the corridors in such numbers that Conboy forbade them to enter the anteroom. It is understood that several seamen complained to the grand jury that the lawyers tried to influence their stories. Some of the attorneys were called in for questioning, spending long and obviously stormy sessions in the jury room. Conboy issued a statement denouncing the Ward Line and its counsel for trying to block the government's investigation.

The Red scare, featuring wild tales in which Alagna and Cuban Communists figured as suspects, has disintegrated, but not because of any lack of effort by the ship owners' attorneys. They missed very few bets. After all, if the board of inquiry could be persuaded (and apparently it could) to accept as true a case framed against a nebulous "Red menace," the Ward Line might escape payment of a huge liability for lives and property lost and passengers injured.

Able seamen on the "Morro Castle" received $50 a month. This is the minimum wage for union seamen, but neither union nor non-union men are satisfied with it. Oilers received $60 a month from the Ward Line; the union scale is $90. Chief Radio Operator Rogers was listed on the company's pay sheets at $120 a month; Acting Captain Warms earned $180 a month as chief mate. Other monthly salaries: ordinary seamen, $35; stewards and stewardesses, $40; firemen, $52; quartermasters, $55.

If the ship really carried her full complement of 270 crew members (the Ward Line isn't certain about that), fifty men were hired so late that they are not shown on the Shipping Commissioner's lists. This method of signing men on at the last minute before a voyage is a habit now in the merchant marine. Shipping companies thus avoid wage payments between voyages, even if that time amounts only to a day or two. The result, which could be pointed out as well before the disaster as after, is the employment of inexperienced seamen.

Evidence of grossly inadequate instruction for emergency action on the ship has been abundant in the hearings. Watchman O'Connor, entrusted with passengers' lives on the "Morro Castle" for more than a year, testified he did not know there was a fire door between the writing room, where the fire apparently started, and the lounge adjoining. Sol Livingstone, another watchman, said he had never received instructions about his fire station or what to do in case of fire. The same story was told by a dozen witnesses, including O'Connor and Mrs. Schwartz, a stewardess. William O'Sullivan, deck storekeeper, testified that only two stations responded to the regular weekly fire drill, which was a feeble and worthless proceeding "because we didn't want to disturb the passengers."

O'Sullivan offered startling information when he declared that "Morro Castle" stewards possessed highly inflammable liquid polish used for cleaning brass. This type of cleanser is strictly forbidden by the Bureau of Steamship Inspection. O'Sullivan swore that the polish was supplied by the company and that ship's officers knew it was used for cleaning brasswork on the bridge.

Mr. Hoover and Inspector Nielson grew indignant at the testimony of another seaman, Joseph Spilgus, who charged that the buoyancy tanks on the "Morro Castle" lifeboats were so badly rusted they could not be expected to keep the boats afloat. This evidence reflects upon the inspection of the ship, for which Mr. Nielson was responsible. Two lifeboats have never been accounted for. Did they capsize, did their passengers drown because the air tanks had rusted paper-thin under a deceptive coat of paint?

Dozens of minor mysteries, most of them created by conflicting statements of witnesses, have yet to be cleared away. The strange death of Captain Willmott only a few hours before the ship caught fire will remain a subject for conjecture, unless chemical examination of his charred remains proves that his end was not caused by heart failure.

The complete truth of the "Morro Castle" story is yet untold as this is written. New facts and theories probably will develop as the hearings continue. But nothing can change the evidence of faulty discipline, insufficient safeguards on the human side if not in mechanical gadgets, and a labor policy almost bound to lead to disaster. Since the Ward Line is in most respects typical of the merchant marine, an ugly blot spreads across the record of the entire industry. It has in the past been a dubious record, but never before has such appalling loss of life seemed attributable to the industry's neglect and evasion. Individual punishments may be the expected aftermath of the tragedy, but any lasting corrective will come only after a thorough examination of merchant-marine practices and consequent enforcement of the navigation laws.

PAUL KEATING.

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Mass Murderers, in Person

IN THIS generation there has been nothing else like the Senate munitions inquiry. Here are people talking in public, for the first time, about international affairs as they are. Unlike the Kellogg-Briand Pact and Article XVI of the League Covenant, machine guns, mobile artillery, submarines, bombing airplanes, are facts that cannot be interpreted, dressed up or explained away.

In one of the early sessions before the Senate committee, a letter was put in the record from a Captain John Ball, head of a contracting firm that disposes of the British War Ministry's surplus weapons. Explaining that his sales are necessarily governed by British policy, he writes: "The stocks we control are of such magnitude that the sale of a big block of them could alter the political balance of power of the smaller states, involving corresponding complications from the point of view of finance and industry." This is the sort of truth ordinary people are seldom permitted to hear.

The hearing takes place in the Senate caucus room, a vast place of abominable acoustics. Competing with the September primary elections and the textile strike, it attracts few first-string Washington correspondents. The handful of spectators mostly represent women's peace organizations; there are a few lobbyists and observers for foreign governments. The earnest Japanese students who usually turn up wherever military affairs are discussed are surprisingly absent.

Senator Nye, the chairman, is a country boy seeing the Streets of Paris at the Chicago fair. Revelations of wholesale bribery and the employment of loose women continuously awe him. It is as difficult for him to say the word "graft" as for a late Victorian to say "sex." Questioning witnesses, he pauses, smiles self-consciously, and comes out with some synonym: "grease," "palm-oil," "the needful." Senator George looks angry and sucks his teeth. At the opposite end of the table, Senator Pope is immersed in endless note-taking.

The brains and soul of the inquiry is slender, stoop-shouldered Homer Bone, a huge cigar dwarfing his thin face. He is absorbed in finding out what happened, what the truth is. Unlike his colleagues, he makes no little speeches about peace, expresses no horror. With the same burning, amoral curiosity with which Dr. Ditmars studies reptiles, he picks up and examines each witness. When he is questioning, facts pour out. When he ceases, the inquiry dies.

Here they sit, in the flesh, the merchants of death. Here is Driggs, only maker of anti-aircraft artillery in America, with the face of a character by Richard Harding Davis. Driggs, and Carse and Spear, pioneer submarine builders, come from a world as remote from most of us as the world of a circus trapeze artist. They are professional men of war, and all their lives have been spent with other professionals. They feel no shame, no guilt. Obviously they feel that if anyone is morally at fault, it is the committee, for its rude and ridiculous questions.

Little Miranda—"Alfredo" to scores of bribe-hungry Latin American officials, is a different case. A Mexican, he used to be a sort of Latin American fixer for armament brokers; lately he seems to have become chief agent for Bolivia in its Chaco-war purchases. He has his own firm and in the last twelve months has had contracts for more than a million dollars. He discovers he can shock Senator Nye, and begins boasting of the ambassadors, generals and admirals he has suborned. Darkly he hints of worse practices, involving women, employed by his European rivals. He laughs delightedly at the horrified wonder on the committee's faces.

Driggs, the two submarine builders and little Alfredo, however, are relatively small fry. The first true merchants of death are the Curtiss-Wright representatives, J. S. Allard and C. W. Webster. Curtiss-Wright is no devious, bootlegging enterprise. Through General Motors, it is part of the du Pont interests; its shares are traded in on the New York Exchange; we are having our first real chance to see how the present economic system and war fit in together.

Allard and Webster are young men. A few years back, Allard might have been chosen "most gentlemanly" in his senior-class election. In a human stock-breeding show, he would be judged far above any of the Senators, above anyone else in the room. Unlike the earlier witnesses, there is nothing strange or morbid about him. How is it he is a merchant of death?

He was excited by aviation, as some of the best of his generation are. Especially these last few years, not many planes have been bought by commercial transport lines and private individuals. The world over, airplane makers have had to depend on military orders. Curtiss-Wright was building planes for the United States government; it had all necessary designs and machinery, and if it could sell a few extra machines of the same models in Latin America, they would be almost all profit. Here was this promising young man, Allard, why not give him a chance? Allard became president of Curtiss-Wright Export; this was his opening and he worked hard.

Early last summer, the Bolivians were reported to have bombed unfortified Paraguayan settlements on the upper Paraguay River. Paraguay protested to the League of Nations, and civilized people

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everywhere were indignant. But Webster, mentioning the newspaper stories of the bombing, writes: "I'm glad to see the Bolivians are getting some good out of the planes they have bought." Webster had sold the planes over European competition, and like any merchant was pleased that his goods were giving satisfaction.

The du Pont representatives proper are older than the Curtiss-Wright men, and not given to writing indiscreet letters about killing people, or at least not to leaving such letters in the company's files. They look like the makers of sport shoes, women's hosiery, automobile tops, enamel paint, that they are. Quiet, well integrated men. Not Babbitts, but on the other hand, none of this opera-cloak nonsense of the overrated Sir Basil Zaharoff.

Yet with these quiet men we come face to face with our central problem. If tomorrow a major war breaks out anywhere on earth, du Ponts will sell munitions to one or both belligerents. Very soon, under the leadership of du Pont and perhaps Bethlehem Steel, you will see an interest in pushing the United States into the war begin to grow among American industrialists. To save the credit of belligerents, to have a voice in dividing the economic spoils of the peace, we shall be dragged into the next war as certainly as we were into the last.

The position of the du Pont representatives before the Senate committee is clear. They disapprove of war; they hate killing. Mr. Irénée du Pont has issued a pamphlet telling how much the du Pont interests hate war, and they all subscribe to what Mr. du Pont says. However, the du Pont company is the central unit in the War Department's plan for industrial mobilization in event of war. With the steel companies, it forms the backbone of America's immense *potentiel de guerre,* the existence of which is mainly why an American President's word is law in the Western hemisphere, why the Japanese have kept out of the Yangtse Valley, why the Japanese haven't dared annex north China. Much as the du Ponts hate war, they are patriots, and aware of their responsibilities to the nation. If now they make a small quantity of munitions, and experiment in poison gas, they'll be so much better prepared when America calls.

Before the inquiry started, Senator Nye had a plan to end forever the danger of armament makers' forcing us into another war. He proposed a tax of 100 percent on all munitions profits to take effect automatically as war was declared. All incentive to promote wars, theoretically, thus would be removed. But this panacea seems less certain as big business men appear before the committee and as correspondence goes into the record showing Cabinet officers, diplomats and soldiers humbly obeying the munitions companies' commands. If war should come, the du Ponts and the steel manufacturers and airplane makers, amid the applause of the country, would offer their services to Washington, and with their banking associates would have a very good chance of getting Senator Nye's law on profits interpreted so that munitions companies could earn half their capitalization in a single year.

The extent to which, according to the evidence, the munitions makers dominate the State Department, the army and navy, is probably the most important thing the investigation has established. Secretary Hull felt impelled to visit the hearing and inform correspondents that the State Department is not hindering the investigation, that on the contrary it approves of it and has advised that the protests of foreign notables named as bribe-takers be ignored.[1] He also felt it necessary to issue a statement pointing out that he himself was the first to propose an embargo on arms to the Chaco.

Very true, but how about the far more decisive matter of the sale of some hundred and fifty military planes to Chiang Kai-shek's government in China?—sales for which the State Department was held responsible by Mr. Amau, spokesman of the Japanese Foreign Office, in the most violent protest yet made to us by Japan. In fact, the planes were bought by the Chinese upon the recommendation of a United States army officer who suddenly appeared in China as Chiang Kai-shek's aviation adviser. Our minister to China, Mr. Johnson, has great influence at Nanking, and if he had explained that the State Department disapproved of the traffic in arms, and did not want an American citizen made aviation adviser, none would have been. Furthermore, it is safe to say no American planes would have been sold.

It is extremely important that the Senate committee take up the question of why the State Department thinks it is a bad thing to sell fighting planes to Bolivia, and a good thing to sell them to Chiang Kai-shek. Perhaps the Department thinks that if Chiang is provided with a modern air fleet, he can break up the Chinese Soviet governments that now cover so much of China's interior. Even in the depression, American business men succeeded in making profits in the Shanghai area. If the Chinese Soviets were smashed, it might be possible for American capital seriously to begin China's exploitation, and everyone knows China is a limitless export market. In short, we have a national interest that is served by selling war planes to Chiang, and none that can be served by prolonging the Chaco war, especially since Paraguay seems to be winning. Some such reasoning as this may have taken place in Mr. Hull's mind, for you will remember he answered Mr. Amau with a declaration that we insist on our right to trade with China.

The Senate investigation is an unhappy experience for tender idealists who thought all decent people were against force in international affairs. Here is a high-minded public servant, Mr. Hull, who

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[1] Since this article was written, the committee has refrained from putting into the record the names of certain individuals connected with the sale of planes to China and the texts of five cablegrams to the du Ponts from various South American interests.—THE EDITORS.

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seems to have no objection to force in the affairs of China. Here is the du Pont group, one of the most important in American industry, that takes it for granted we must be militarily dominant to maintain our external trade. Here is Allard of Curtiss-Wright, the sort of person most people like to think of as the typical young American, who accepts and acts on these concepts of his elders.

The most solid, hopeful element in the investigation, it seems to me, is the attitude of Senator Bone. Unlike Mr. Nye, he does not seek for trick, painless solutions. An instinctive scientist, little by little he is bringing up into the light a fundamental part of our present system so everyone can look at it. To do that is better than to take superficial, meaningless action. JONATHAN MITCHELL.

British Action in Slum Clearance

IN 1919 the British Parliament imposed a definite statutory obligation on local authorities to consider the needs of their areas with respect to the provision of houses for the working classes, and as often as the need arises—every fifth year in accordance with the policy of the present government—to submit to the Minister of Health schemes for exercising their powers. Since the passage of the 1919 Act, slum clearance has indeed been dealt with, but with insufficient force and resources to ensure a speedy end to the evil—1,177,863 houses have been built from the Armistice to March 31, 1934—while the houses erected have for the most part been insufficiently low-priced to meet the urgent needs of the people.

It is now the policy of the government under the Housing Act of 1930 to restrict the activities of local authorities to slum clearance and rehousing, and to place responsibility for such programs upon these authorities. Government subsidies are limited to their operations. State assistance takes the form of a fixed annual exchequer grant payable for forty years and consisting of 45 shillings for each person necessarily displaced from houses in clearance and improvement areas.

The Greenwood Act (1930) provides primarily that local housing authorities may declare an area to be either a clearance or an improvement. A clearance area is defined as one in which it is necessary to demolish all of the buildings, but it may surround "islands" of good property not included in the clearance area; while an improvement area is one where unhealthy conditions can be effectively remedied (without demolition of all the buildings) by the demolition or repair of dwelling houses, the abatement of overcrowding and the purchase of land for opening out the area. As regards individual defective homes, the local authority may require them to be repaired or demolished, and can act in default of the owner.

The government's machinery for slum-clearance and rehousing programs is geared to abolish the slum evil in the next five years. For the past twenty years local authorities have been required to inspect and record housing conditions in their areas, and as a result they are able to take immediate action to list the areas where clearance is necessary, with the number of houses and persons affected.

The government has prepared a time table for the progress and completion of its slum-clearance programs within the scheduled time and also a table for rehousing, coördinated with the displacements contemplated by the time table of clearance operations. The schedule provides for the demolition of 53,200 houses and the erection of 57,000, annually, for the next five years.

Realizing the necessity for adequate subsidies to provide low-rental homes, the government increased its contributions for housing from £11,875,806 in 1930-31 to £13,645,000 in 1933-34. To clear away the 200,000 houses and to provide the necessary new ones in five years as pledged, the government, according to the Minister of Health, will be required to spend £95,000,000. And yet the committee on replanning of the Royal Institute of British Architects believes that slum clearance must be undertaken on a much larger scale than is possible under present methods if the war against English slums is to be successfully carried out on all fronts.

In the past, rehousing schemes have commonly been developed in the outer areas of British cities, as housing estates or garden cities, and it was only a recent decision on the part of the government that the best method of dealing with congested central areas is to give the local authorities power to acquire areas of overcrowded property and develop them. Sir Hilton Young, the Minister of Health, was quoted by The Morning Post on June 5 as saying that "the high cost of building tenements on expensive land would make it impossible without assistance to let the flats at rents within the means of the class of family for whom they were provided. Financial assistance from public funds would therefore be essential and would therefore be forthcoming." The former method of escape from high land values at the center by building at the periphery on low-cost land would seem to have been supplemented by a rationalization of the values in central areas so that low-wage earners may be accommodated, as quickly as possible, within easy access of their work and at lower rents.

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This new shift in location has undoubtedly in part followed the difficulties encountered in the housing schemes developed in the city of Hull. A recent study of this scheme disclosed that

> the Corporation (municipal) has developed several large housing estates on the outskirts of the city, from which they have had to move families displaced from the dockside-clearance schemes. Here has arisen a problem common to all big cities, the method, time and cost of transport from the place of employment to place of residence. Regulations compel a docker, if employed, to sign on twice a day, and it is not feasible to expect him to walk three or four miles each way for that purpose. On the other hand, tram fares cannot be spared out of unemployment pay. This has caused a drift back to overcrowded houses nearer the docks, which, if continued, will cause much of the work of slum clearance to be wasted.

Although the Conservative national government and the Labor Party are far from agreement as to many aspects of the housing policy, the public insistence for a more drastic change in slum conditions will be sure to win the support of all for the local program of the London County Council and of all the municipal authorities. Indeed, the national government itself in the report of the departmental committee on housing of the Ministry of Health states that even proposals for repair or reconditioning must be related to and coördinated with "proposals for clearance; otherwise reconditioning schemes would be mere unsatisfactory patchwork," The government's report goes on to say—despite the fact that the Conservatives are wedded to fostering private enterprise on working-class housing in general: "More cogent evidence than has been presented to us would in our opinion be required before Parliament should decide to discard the accumulated experience of fourteen years of municipal housing in order to experiment with a new and untried organization."

It is upon the 1,716 local authorities that the responsibility for wiping out the slums now definitely rests. The area administered by the London County Council alone has twenty-nine metropolitan councils. Upon the initiative and activity of these councils depends the carrying out of the government's war against the slums. The ready response of local authorities to the request of the Ministry of Health for slum-clearance programs has indicated the effectiveness of local authorities not only in administering slum-clearance programs, but also as agencies for spreading knowledge and forming sound public opinion to assist the government in putting an end to degrading conditions.

Local authorities fix the rents in their areas. They determine the type of layout best suited to a particular area, and whether or not an area is to be developed in terms of many blocks or few—the London County Council building if it likes on as small an area as three blocks. The local procedure of slum clearance and rehousing is left to the consideration of the local authority. But the Minister of Health has suggested

> that the best method of approach may be to determine the total amount of rehousing required, to divide that rehousing as nearly equally as may be between the years allotted by the local authority to their program, and to adjust to that production of houses the flow of orders to be made, or of action in relation to individual houses to be taken, by the local authority, so that displacements will keep pace with the supply of rehousing accommodation.

The fundamental difference between the situation in Great Britain and in the United States is that we are still not conscious of the housing needs of the lower-income groups. The well defined national-municipal relationship with regard to housing, the aggressive and continuing policy of the government and the unregimented though required procedure of local authorities offer a sharp challenge to American administrators, federal and local alike.

MARY KINGSBURY SIMKHOVITCH.

Pawns of the State

WHEN Chester A. Donner, the druggist, walked into Elmer Durkin's news and nicotine den that September night he found the proprietor curled up with a copy of The Saturday Evening Post. Elmer looked at the intruder and said, more in sorrow than in anger:

"Chet, I hate to file a squawk on an old buddy, but all you are is a pawn of the state."

"I knew something was the matter with me." The tired business man sank into a chair and glanced at the popular-fiction weekly. " 'Herbert Hoover' —somehow the name sounds familiar."

The newsdealer ignored this interruption.

"You forget what your grandpappies did at Plymouth Rock and Valley Forge and San Juan Hill and you let a bunch of lousy New Dealers undermine your Constitution and tell you where to get off." Elmer referred to the ex-President's essay and refreshed his memory. "Regimentation is what you've got a bad case of, Chet. You're just a regimental defective. The Bureaucracy orders you around as if it was a traffic cop and can you take it!"

"Who was the guy," asked the mischievous apothecary, "who was telling us what to drink and what not to drink a little while back?"

"That's all according to the rules of politics. If our noble fellows pull a little rough stuff, it's the American System, but what the other gang does is a Challenge to Liberty. We had an awful dose of regimentation during the War, but that was okay by Herby because he was the daughter of the regiment. He ordered us to make our bread out of cow feed and eat fish and clean up everything on the plate and stay home on Sunday to save gas and freeze our dogs on Monday. The farmers could charge so and so for their wheat or get cracked

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down on. If a guy wrote a squawk like this in 1918 he would land in the jug."

Elmer continued with his rough translation.

"We used to keep savage creatures called Congressmen to bite the Chief Executive and make us a free people, but not any more. When Franklin Dictator Roosevelt chiseled into the picture, Capitol Hill just rolled over and played dead. Those push-overs slipped him everything he asked for. At that, you can't blame our hero for crabbing that act, because when he was chief those grumps up the Avenue wouldn't yes him if he said the Potomac was wet.

"The next thing we knew we were just a lot of pawns of the state. Manufacturers got their style cramped by codes and farmers had to reduce acreage if they wanted to rate any dividends out of the till. Rugged individuals should not be made to pay their way in like that.

"Next these brain trusties began monkeying with the value of the dollar. This might raise prices back to where they were in Saint Calvin's day and gyp the thrifty out of their hard-earned kale. Besides, diving off the gold standard was the same as jacking up the tariff, and these barriers put the kayo on foreign trade. Can you bear that, Chet? About the last thing Hoover said before forty states fell on him was that the holy tariff was all that kept grass from sprouting in the concrete.

"Now just relax; this might hurt a little. If we have to have any laws to butt into people's affairs they should be state, not national. Six years back he gave Al the works for making noises like that.

"What I mean, the boy has talent. He can take either end of a squabble and play it for Liberalism, Rugged Individualism, the American System and the Battle of San Juan Hill. And if you don't agree with him you're an ilk."

"So I'm an ilk," said the pharmacist.

"But the old jinx," said Elmer, "is still hanging around. The same day this piece comes out the sunkissed Democrats up and pick Sinclair for Governor, and Comrade Uppy is about eight deals newer than F.D.R.

"Probably this is the opening popgun of the campaign and we'll have Fletcher and Dave Reed and Ogden Mills dancing around the liberty pole any day now. Maybe it will click and maybe I'm a fan dancer. If the Democrats get a few bounced off their schnozzles this fall it won't be for this reason. Guys would trade in their used liberty any day for a mess of nutriment and have been doing so ever since Bertie wore short pants. If the customers kick, it's because the New Deal hasn't produced any regular meals."

"I wonder," asked Donner, "if the old boy will try to stage a comeback?"

"Your hunch is as bad as mine," said Elmer, "but I'll bet you a baloney dollar against a dish of alphabet soup that he'll just pull the Constitution up around his chin and go back to sleep."

FELIX RAY.

Washington Notes

Maine Comes Through—Non-Political Politicians —Doubts on Whether the Boys "Can Take It"—A Well Handled Strike

NOW THAT the Maine election is over and the people closest to Mr. Roosevelt somewhat recovered from their funk, it is likely, I think, that more progress will be made in handling the various prickly problems which were either taken to Hyde Park by the President or laid in his lap after he got there. It is a rather unpleasant thing to relate, but the fact is, as I hinted here last week, that the presidential entourage was in such a state about the Maine election that its agitation slightly infected the President himself, and to more than one of his callers he revealed himself as curiously apprehensive of losing control of the House. At the time of Douglas' resignation, he even communicated these fears to certain House leaders upon whom he relies, and was greatly consoled when they scouted the idea as ridiculous. It is difficult to understand his frame of mind when one considers the enormous political advantages with which the New Deal is now equipped and there was no reflection of it in his press conference.

The fact remains that the relief over the returns from Maine was out of proportion to the size of the victory or the significance of the vote. I suppose it is true that every section of the program depends for its success upon popular support and that loss of prestige at the polls would destroy both confidence and morale. Nevertheless, there was something distinctly distasteful in the manner in which men in positions of great responsibility and authority, engaged in work of the widest scope, last week permitted themselves to become completely absorbed in the purely political aspects of the administration. I am inured to this in the ordinary run of politicians, both Democratic and Republican. One expects it of them. What I did not expect was an exhibition of complete political-mindedness upon the part of men naturally non-political, who do not know the tricks, the language or the inner meaning of politics—and never will; who came here on a non-political basis and intellectually are far removed from the practical politician's sphere. To see these men "go Jim Farley," as one somewhat disgusted observer remarked, is not an elevating nor an encouraging sight.

So much stress had been laid on the Maine election and its result has had such a tonic effect upon the whole White House outfit that one cannot help speculating as to what would have happened to the lot of them had it gone the other way and the Republicans swept the state. I shudder to think about it. Looking at their relief, it seems to me that had there been an adverse verdict in Maine, the spirit of the whole administration would have been dampened, its morale lowered and its vitality sapped. I cannot help but record here my belief that, despite the general aggressiveness of their radio speeches and press statements, this administration is largely composed of men who cannot "take it." I do not think that, from Mr. Roosevelt right straight down the line, with one or two exceptions, the executives and administrators into whose

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hands the New Deal policies have been committed are the type of men who function very well in a time of adversity. Appreciation of this fact makes me far more apprehensive than do questions of unbalanced budgets, debts, deficit, labor or capital strikes, conflicting policies and confusion.

Soon or late, political adversity is certain to overtake this administration. In the nature of things it cannot ride indefinitely upon such a high political tide. In all probability it will get past the November elections without a setback, and probably, too, the ebb may not come until after the Roosevelt reëlection. But it is bound to come, and it will find this crowd, whether before 1936 or after 1936, with its job only half done, its objectives only partially achieved, its string far from played out. Based on my observations of their low morale just preceding the Maine election, my belief is that when the bump really comes, this bunch will go to pieces more quickly than any other set that has been gathered together in Washington for a long time. The reason is that most of them have been spoiled. They have never known anything but political prosperity. They have been riding with a tide and know nothing whatever about swimming against one.

But, getting away from this sour note, they are all on the crest again at the moment, full of zeal for the Cause rather than concern for themselves, a much more appetizing state of affairs—for the onlookers at any rate. So far as the N.R.A. is concerned, there is little to report save that the charming General, refreshed and invigorated by his vacation, is once more in our midst, busily engaged in putting into effect the new administrative, legislative and judicial reorganization plan. This the General brought down with him from Hyde Park, and the most interesting feature seems to be that it definitely provides for the continuation of the General at the helm. The prevailing belief in posted quarters, however, is that the new plan is devised not as a permanent proposition, but to tide the whole N.R.A. situation over the November elections. After that, the best information here is that the General will reluctantly close his public career and again adorn the industrial world to his great profit and advantage.

I have long dreaded making predictions about what the General will or will not do, but of one thing I am sure. That is, if and when the General does "relinquish the reins," to use a favored press-agent phrase, he will not depart, as did Mr. Douglas, unwept and unsung, and without a testimonial or recommendation. On the contrary, I venture to predict that the letters which will be exchanged between the President of the United States and General Johnson when the relinquishing day really arrives will break all precedents for both quality and quantity of the mutual esteem and appreciation they will express.

As the week closes, the textile strike assumes greater proportions and a graver aspect. Beyond doubt, it is the most vital struggle between labor and capital that has occurred in a long time, and the forces on both sides recognize that the outcome is likely to be decisive one way or the other. It is impossible to forecast developments that may occur before this dispatch is printed, but it certainly seems true that up to date the strikers have had the better of the public argument and have more effectively presented their position. In such a strike, popular sentiment is an overwhelmingly important factor. Mr. Gorman and the strike leaders apparently have a keen appreciation of this and there has never been, in the opinion of experienced men here, a strike in which the publicity has been so cleverly handled. This, as much as the merits of the case, is calculated to make it easy for the administration to resist pressure from the management to have the President intervene with an appeal to call the strike off pending arbitration. That is what the employers would like to see and what the strikers are anxious to avoid, as it means throwing aside the one real weapon they have. Up to date, the President has given no indication of acting personally, and has left mediation matters in the hands of Governor Winant's board. If that agency fails to function, the next move will have to be a personal one. At any rate, such is the view of some quite close to the President.

T. R. B.

Washington.

Other People's Money

Splitting the N.R.A. Three for One—Organizing a Spending Campaign—The Stock Exchange Files Its Application

I TRIED to find out something about the significance of the newest constitution of the N.R.A. in Washington this week. No one seemed to know precisely what had happened to it. But what was most extraordinary, no one seemed to be very much interested. The N.R.A. in the capital seems to be generally regarded as pretty dead and the chief subject of concern about it is what form the funeral will take. I am not sure that the capital is right in its estimate of the collapse of the noble Johnsonian experiment, but it is worth comment that it should have arrived at this state of mind. The N.R.A., which once threatened to crack down on people with such abandon, is now, at all events, to crack up. That is, it has cracked up into three divisions—the executive, the legislative and the judicial. Thus it takes on the appearance of a little supergovernment. Whether General Johnson will be President of the N.R.A. and Donald Richberg its Chief Justice no one seems to know. Who will constitute the legislative branch is not even discussed. My guess is that, whatever happens, there is going to be a very considerable section of the Democratic Party in Congress out in the open against the N.R.A.

By the time Congress meets it is entirely possible that the President's plan will amount to no more than a face-saving operation. In short, something with the N.R.A. name will be preserved, if possible, but with almost all the things that constituted the real N.R.A. of Johnson taken out. Again I remind readers that the N.I.R.A. was passed to kill the Black Bill for a thirty-hour week and the Connery Bill for a thirty-hour week and a minimum wage. Then Johnson, who represented entirely the attitude of big business for trade-association control, price fixing, production limitation to raise prices, proceeded to turn the N.R.A. over to big business.

Now price fixing, trade-association control without an

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anti-trust law, the right of trade bodies to enact elaborate ordinances carrying criminal penalties for the government of their industries, will be abandoned. Nothing will be left but the shorter-hour and minimum-wage provisions. As to collective bargaining, that, if kept at all, will be relegated to separate legislation. In other words, the surrender on this appalling blunder will be pretty nearly complete. Johnson may enjoy a brief space of face-saving authority—if he does not get out at once, even before this is printed—and then he will fade from the picture. Thus another noble experiment will come to an end—an experiment that ought never to have been started.

Washington is a good deal more interested in what is going to happen to the banks and to the nation's currency. The seriousness of the general business situation is pretty well recognized there. Administration leaders may make brave speeches about all that has been accomplished, but they know as well as anyone that most of the effects of the New Deal have worn off and that the one hope left now is to increase spending. On this question they are at the point of a complete break with the banks. Therefore the government is driven to the necessity of organizing measures for continuing its spending plans, which in the end means its plans for raising money, in spite of bank hostility—there has been already a significant weakening in government bonds. This situation is pregnant with vast possibilities—great and even fundamental changes in the banking system, perhaps some real experiments in money reform. This is the hot spot to keep the eye on during these coming months.

The New York Stock Exchange has filed its application for registry as an exchange under the Securities Exchange Act. Now comes the moment when the Securities and Exchange Commission must determine whether the Exchange is so organized as to ensure adequate enforcement by itself and its members of the provisions of the Act and the rules of the Commission. This now brings to a head for decision whether the present form of the organization of the Exchange is suited to carrying out properly the provisions of the Act. The authority in the Exchange itself for making rules respecting trading and the mechanism set up for the trial of offenders is certainly not calculated to protect the public interest. It is to be hoped, therefore, that the Commission will compel the Exchange to provide for a rule-making authority and a trial body that will give the investor, the banks, the corporations listed, as well as the brokers, full representation.

Numerous applications have been made by small exchanges around the country for exemption from registry and control. One exchange insists that it is nothing but a luncheon club. If that is so, it should change its name and apply for registration under the Board of Health. Still others insist they are doing too little business to justify control. The Commission can find a way under the act to suspend the application of the law to these exchanges and should, if possible, do so rather than give them an exemption. The whole question of the small exchange should be studied before final action is taken.

JOHN T. FLYNN.

A Few Films from Many

ALTHOUGH there have been several of greater pretensions, I think the picture for this month must be "Crime Without Passion"—more for what is behind it than for what is in it, though its story of a criminal lawyer who was all brain in the courts and all something else in love makes good enough stuff for the films. The author-producers are Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur, two men who took what Hollywood might call high foreheads out to Hollywood and made a success of it. They have learned how films should be made and accepted all the terms, and they are now out to make films on their own.

Their first release is a frank thriller, mostly. Claude Rains as the legal mind prepares elaborate and cruel devices for getting rid of a dancing girl whose affection has become repulsive; there is a scuffle and the girl is shot by mistake, and the legal mind (now most unfortunately symbolized by a sort of continuous insert of Mr. Rains, cautioning himself, directing) prepares elaborate devices for baffling detection. Follows the usual routine of alibis, close calls and a final breakdown that answers the need for an ending, but little else. In the long run the thing does not stand up properly because action came first, motives, problems and the like being thrown in gratis. What makes it interesting is that the authors have brought wit and wisdom to a medium rather deficient in the latter at least, that there is a meaning to some of the situations and an edge to some of the dialogue not found in the usual run of scripts.

Claude Rains seems to be an essentially right man for the part, but there is too much of him by far, and the part itself is neither sympathetic nor well worked out: Ben Hecht has always been ready to fall into a flash sort of display, and Mr. Rains now seems prepared at such points to see him and raise him one, getting hold of an idea and then plugging it to death. The film is helped most by Margo, a girl recruited from the night clubs who sings her song with guitar and acts the part of the jilted dancer with such naturalness and human quality, with such lovely restraint of feeling and voice, that you will come away thinking her beautiful, which in plain daylight she is not. Paula Trueman also does a nice bit of work. Lee Garmes, Art Rosson and Slavko Vorkapitch have been brought from Hollywood for camera work and technical advice, and reports are that responsibility is all in a jumble out in Long Island where the picture was made. But the fact remains that "Crime Without Passion" is worth seeing for Margo alone, and also for other reasons, one of them being that the whole venture seems to take a long stride forward for the movies, with promises of more to follow.

"One Night of Love" is an innovation of another color, an attempt to deal with Great Music. There are some good swelling notes in the last sixteenth of it, and moments of humor here and there between Tullio Carminati and Luis Alberni; but in the main it turns out to be a gawp-show. Most of it is taken up with a very wearing story: the maestro, the prima donna, temperaments, Italy, romance. All leading up to a few shots of the proscenium at the Metropolitan and the Diamond Horseshoe (there, implica-

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tion has it, sit those who will know great music when they see it and register the same on shining faces); and all bearing the words, done in splendid grease paint: This is how it is with the Artist. Ah Life. Ah Art. There is no denying that something fine might come of such an initial idea, but it will never come on these creaking wheels, and it will never walk with these silly genuflections toward a picture-man's version of what music must be like. Even if there were not all this vulgar bowing and scraping, there would still be those long stretches of Grace Moore, who has a voice, but beyond certain wooden pantomimics, no acting grace whatever.

There is more honesty if not talent in the native product, "She Loves Me Not," in which Bing Crosby sings pleasantly and even acts a bit. A pretty bad and raucous but lively story of how a night-club girl (Miriam Hopkins) fled for refuge to Princeton—where, one gathers, everything is collegiate, everybody's father is president of something, and heroines have *just* got back from Paris. The picture has a plug for Chase National (Chase has got Paramount where it wants it), and a plug for Paramount itself, but also some quite amusing satire on the making of a newsreel, a couple of pretty songs and spots of group singing that are effective. It does, in short, what it knows how to do, which always seems to make the bad spots of any picture more endurable.

To these few pictures, chosen rather arbitrarily from among many, add for balance: "Side Streets" and "Straight Is the Way," slight drama but worth the time for their good handling and reality; "Bulldog Drummond Strikes Back," slight comedy but hardly funny; "Hide-Out," to be avoided; "The Scarlet Empress," to be shunned.

OTIS FERGUSON.

The Redshanks

Drive on, sharp wings, and cry above
Not contemplating life or love
Or war or death: a winter flight
Impartial to our human plight.

I below shall still remain
On solid earth, with fear and pain,
Doubt, and act, and nervous strive,
As best I may, to keep alive.

What useless dream, a hope to sail
Down the wide, transparent gale,
Until, insentient, I shall be
As gaseous a transparency.

What useless dream, a hope to wring
Comfort from a migrant wing:
Human or beast, before us set
The incommunicable net.

Parallel, yet separate,
The languages we mistranslate,
And knowledge seems no less absurd
If of a mistress, or a bird.

JULIAN BELL.

CORRESPONDENCE

Guild, Code and Mr. Hanson

[In The New Republic of July 4, 1934, there appeared an article entitled "Newswriters vs. the N.R.A.," by John Scribner. We have received from Mr. Elisha Hanson, counsel for the American Newspaper Publishers' Association, a letter of protest against this article. Mr. Hanson's letter is about 5,700 words long, making it impossible for us to publish it in its entirety in one issue of The New Republic. We give below that part of the letter dealing with the Newspaper Code and Mr. Hanson's relation to it, with a reply by John Eddy, executive secretary of the American Newspaper Guild. In a later issue of The New Republic we shall summarize and comment upon that part of Mr. Hanson's letter dealing with his own career.—THE EDITORS.]

SIR: . . . The chief complaint of Mr. "Scribner" against the daily newspapers, which I have served for many years as an attorney, is that they have not fulfilled a promise made to representatives of the American Newspaper Guild by the President of the United States. He declares that the newspapers have prevented the President from keeping his word.

Now what are the facts?

While the daily-newspaper code was still in the formative process, Mr. Heywood Broun and other members of the newly formed Guild, accompanied by counsel, met with the Deputy Administrator of the N.R.A. assigned to the code, the Code Committee of the six organizations of daily-newspaper publishers which were coöperating in code work, and counsel for the publishers in New York. A stenographic record was kept of the proceedings. The record demonstrates that, at that time, October, 1933, while Mr. Broun and his associates, including their counsel, knew they wanted something in the code for news-department workers, they did not know what it was, and they had no data upon which to base any request.

After a full and free discussion, it was mutually agreed that the publishers would make a survey of hours, wages and working conditions in news departments, which in turn was to be used for the purpose of determining maximum hours and minimum wages for news-department employees in an appropriate code provision.

The work on the survey began immediately. Before it was concluded, however, the N.R.A. and the publishers' committee had agreed on every other provision in the code. The N.R.A. was particularly anxious in early December to obtain a code from daily newspapers at the earliest possible moment, so when all other provisions had been agreed to, the publishers, in order to keep their commitment to the Guild, inserted in Article III, Section 1, a requirement that the Code Authority should "secure the necessary data and . . . determine the maximum hours and minimum wages for news-department workers and, subject to the approval of the Administration, . . . incorporate its findings in the provision of this Code." At the request of the N.R.A., they added this proviso: "Until such time as its findings are made a part of this Code, present conditions shall be maintained."

The code in its final form was not submitted to the N.R.A. with a request for approval until after the publishers' committee had received assurances from General Johnson and Mr. Richberg, General Counsel of the N.R.A., that it was acceptable in every respect and would be approved as submitted. It was given to the N.R.A. in early December and forwarded to the White House on or about December 23.

There it lay until February 17, 1934, when the President approved it in an order modifying and in effect nullifying Article VII (the controversial freedom-of-the-press reservation). In no other respect, in so far as the substance of the code provisions are concerned, did his order modify any of its provisions. The publishers' committee met in New York on February 22, 1934, notified General Johnson that they would not recommend adherence by publishers to the code unless the President rescinded his order in so far as Article VII was concerned. At the General's request, the committee came to Washington for a conference on February 23.

The following day, February 24, President Roosevelt issued a supplemental order on the code approving Article VII "as sub-

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mitted and without modification, condition or qualification."

In his original order of February 17, the President directed that "The determination of hours and wages for news-department workers shall be made not later than sixty days hence."

Further, he directed the government members on the Code Authority to report to him within sixty days on the provisions of Article V, Section 1, in respect of the employment of persons under sixteen years of age engaged in the delivery and sale of newspapers. Neither of these requirements provided for or entailed a modification of any provision in the code. The most that can be said for them was that in the one instance the President was desirous of having a report as to how the code provisions operated and in the other he wanted an expeditious determination of maximum hours and minimum wages for news-department workers, as already provided for in the code, which determination the publishers had agreed to make.

The responsibility for the failure to make the determination required by the code and promptly as asked for by the President is wholly that of Mr. Broun, Mr. Eddy and their associates. It cannot be placed on the doorstep of the N.R.A., the American Newspaper Publishers' Association, the Code Authority for the Daily Newspaper Publishing Business, one of General Johnson's assistants or my own.

The publishers' survey was completed before the code was approved by the President. At no time between December 23 and February 17 were publishers advised as to any reason for the long delay in White House consideration of the code other than pressure of more important business on the President's time. At no time did the publishers' committee or its counsel make any attempt, directly or indirectly, to see the President or impress their views on him. By reason of assurances received from the N.R.A. early in December, when the code was submitted, they regarded such a course as wholly unnecessary.

As soon as the Code Authority was organized, and it was ready for business on the effective date of the code, March 12, 1934, it notified the N.R.A. it was prepared to proceed with the matter of determining maximum hours and minimum wages for news-department workers. It tendered to the N.R.A. copies of the survey heretofore referred to.

The N.R.A. asked the Code Authority to hold a public hearing on the matter. This was done on April 30. Mr. Broun, Mr. Eddy, other members of the Guild and their counsel appeared. The Deputy Administrator represented the N.R.A. In due course, the Code Authority made its recommendation to the Administrator.

In April, as in the preceding October, the Guild was without data and in April it asked for further delay before the code was complied with. From that day to this, the N.R.A. has been unable to obtain from the Guild any agreement as to a date for further hearing, if it desires further hearing on the question. My most recent advices from the N.R.A. are to the effect the Guild does not want a date set before October 1. So much for that question.

The Code for the Daily Newspaper Publishing Business, in Article VI, Section 5, sets up a Newspaper Industrial Board for the settlement of any controversy "between employers and employees arising from the application of this Code," except controversies which are adjusted locally and controversies where a contract or agreement provides a method of determination.

The Board consists of eight members, four designated by the Code Authority to represent the employers and four selected by the N.R.A. Labor Advisory Board, subject to the approval of the Administrator, to represent the employees. In the event of a tie, the vote of a ninth and impartial chairman, to be selected by these eight, is conclusive.

Mr. "Scribner," in his article, states that on December 15 last, Heywood Broun and a delegation of newspaper men called upon the President at the White House. General Johnson, he states, was present. "Both the President and General Johnson," he says further, "gave their unconditional promise that the newswriters would be given representation on the Newspaper Industrial Board."

Then he points out that when the N.R.A. announced the personnel of the Board, the news-department workers had no representatives thereon.

Until after the N.R.A. Labor Advisory Board made its selection of employee members on the Industrial Board, publishers did not even know of the promise made by the President and General Johnson to the Guild. Had they known of it, they could have done nothing about it, either to block or aid its fulfilment. It would have been wholly improper for them to offer any suggestions to the N.R.A. Labor Advisory Board as to the employee representation. They offered none, directly or indirectly.

When the matter of the President's promise was called to their attention, members of the Code Authority gave it consideration, and solely for the purpose of aiding the Guild, the President and the N.R.A., recommended to publishers assenting to the Daily Newspaper Code that they assent to an amendment of the code which would permit the Industrial Board to be increased by the addition of two members, one from the employees and the other from the publishers.

Because of the specific provisions of Article VII of the code, no amendment or modification of the code is effective as against any individual publisher who assented to the original instrument in the absence of assent by that publisher to the amendment or modification. The code itself provides the method for making amendments, and neither President Roosevelt, General Johnson nor anyone else can amend it except in compliance with its specific terms. The by-laws of the Code Authority prevent it from submitting an amendment to the N.R.A. until a period of twenty-one days has elapsed after submission to publishers assenting to the code and the views of publishers have been obtained.

After the publishers' Code Authority had agreed to help the President and the General keep their promise to the Guild, certain unfortunate happenings occurred which prevented them. Briefly, they were these:

At the request of the N.R.A., I conferred with Mr. Richberg on May 24 for the purpose of drafting an amendment which would be satisfactory to the N.R.A. and the Code Authority alike. On May 25, we agreed upon a form and I told Mr. Richberg that if this was agreeable to General Johnson, I would forward it to the Code Authority with my recommendation that the Code Authority approve it and in turn ask for authority from publishers assenting to the code to submit it to the N.R.A. with a formal request for modification of the code. I was informed by Mr. Richberg over the telephone that the form was agreeable to General Johnson.

On May 28, General Johnson, without my knowledge, and in specific violation of the provision of the code, promulgated an order amending it in respect of the Newspaper Industrial Board membership.

On May 29, I was informed this order was suspended.

Notwithstanding this slip on the part of the N.R.A., I still insisted that the Code Authority proceed. This it did on June 1.

The climax came on June 4, when the N.R.A. announced the appointment of an additional member of the Newspaper Industrial Board, appointed pursuant to the order of May 28, which, as I have stated, was promulgated illegally and in violation of the code.

This action was accepted by publishers as a second challenge of the validity of Article VII of their code. The first was issued by the President in his order of February 17 and withdrawn by his order of February 24, when he formally approved this Article "as submitted and without modification, condition or qualification."

The issue was not over Guild representation on the Industrial Board but over the validity of the code itself.

That this is so is indicated by two paragraphs in Mr. "Scribner's" article; one wherein he quotes General Johnson as saying:

"By God—I will keep that promise if I have to split the Code wide open to do it."

And the other wherein he quotes Blackwell Smith, Acting General Counsel of the N.R.A., as saying to the General:

"All you have to do is to issue an executive order and give anyone ten days to object."

Both General Johnson and Mr. Smith, if they were quoted correctly, were, in the vernacular, talking through their hats.

The Daily Newspaper Code cannot be cracked wide open by any action of the N.R.A. not assented to by publishers who have subscribed to the code. The gentlemen quoted have learned this.

The Code Committee of the six daily-newspapers-publisher or-

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ganizations called this situation to the attention of publishers and almost without exception they rejected the proposed modification. In fact, less than a half-dozen members approved it, out of nearly 1,200 under the code, and their approval was recorded prior to June 5.

I do not know what impelled General Johnson to promulgate his order in violation of the code—whether it was pressure from the White House, the Guild, or advice from his legal department, or whether it was just an unfortunate mistake. All I know is that the Code Authority and its attorney did everything within their power to assist the President and General Johnson to keep the alleged promise of December 15, which was by all accounts forgotten at the time it originally should have been kept. That the N.R.A., by the succession of events between May 28 and June 5, made it impossible for us to assist is not our fault. These very happenings, if no other, indicate the propriety of as well as the necessity for Article VII in the Daily Newspaper Code.

Only a few weeks ago, General Johnson, in his Waterloo speech, has conceded the original error of his way in respect of this freedom-of-the-press reservation and admitted the propriety of the stand taken by publishers in July, 1933, in defense of their trusteeship of this inherent right of the American people.

Just that the record may be complete on this point, let me say that last August, after weeks of controversy, the publishers forced acceptance of their reservation in the temporary code which was proposed in a substitute for the President's Reëmployment Agreement. Prior thereto, their counsel submitted to General Johnson a brief holding conclusively that constitutional rights could be waived for a consideration or by a course of conduct. In the Weirton steel case, the Attorney General of the United States recently confirmed their position. Had they accepted the order of May 28, they would have surrendered the position they took last year and maintained thereafter.

Why the Guild, in the light of its refusal to coöperate in the determination of maximum hours and minimum wages for news-department employees, should be so insistent upon having representation on the Newspaper Industrial Board is a question it can answer. If publishers maintain the conditions that existed as of March 12 last, there is nothing for the Board to consider about news-department employees until the determination is made. To a casual observer, it would appear as though the gentlemen who were instrumental in organizing the Guild are more interested in obtaining a position for one in their group than in arriving at a proper and fair determination of hours and wages for Guild members.

The pertinent point, however, is that if the President, as Mr. "Scribner" alleges, really promised the Guild a place on the Board, he always had it in his power to keep that promise, irrespective of the publishers. He could have directed the N.R.A. Labor Advisory Board to make the selection in the first instance. Having failed to do this, he could have directed the Labor Advisory Board to call upon one of its four original designates to resign, to provide room for a Guild designate.

The matter has been disposed of by the voluntary withdrawal of one of the four original designates and the selection of Mr. Eddy to succeed him.

Mr. "Scribner" denounces the selections of Ralph Pulitzer and George Buckley as Deputy Administrators of the N.R.A. He infers they are tools of the newspaper publishers. The publishers had nothing to do with either choice. In fact, I do not even know if Mr. Pulitzer ever took office before he was run out by the Guild, according to its own boast. Neither did the publishers have anything to do with the selection of Messrs. Cates and Kemp and Dr. Lindsay Rogers, other N.R.A. Deputies with whom they have had to do business. It is not their province to tell General Johnson whom he may or may not have as his assistants. And it would be a reflection on their intelligence, to say nothing of their integrity, if they attempted to exercise such power.

All through the last year, they have dealt courteously, even though firmly, with the General and any of his Deputies he has assigned to their problems. They will continue to deal on that basis, and that alone. While there have been disagreements, there has been mutual respect.

Washington, D. C. ELISHA HANSON.

SIR: John Scribner's article was written, as he said, to show "how difficult it is for working people to obtain even a semblance of fairness under the N.I.R.A.," and the difficulties of the Guild were detailed at some length principally to show that "in at least one department of the N.R.A. it is unlikely that the penalties of the law will be used vigorously against any powerful group or individual violating the provisions of the law."

Mr. Hanson supports this thesis with such force that he leaves practically nothing for us to say. It will be recalled that all the Guild wanted was one of its men to sit on the unsalaried board which passes on industrial disputes. We learn from Mr. Hanson for the first time that this was what the publishers wanted too. If what Mr. Hanson says is true, then we take off our hats to the generous publishers, and stand at attention silently for a full minute in token of our heartfelt and humble gratitude.

We had been informed otherwise. But now we know how it really was. The publishers were with us. They wanted us to have our man on the board. Members of the Code Authority, he says, "solely for the purpose of aiding the Guild [again, thanks!], the President and the N.R.A.," recommended to the publishers that they assent to a change in the code to let the Guild have what it wanted.

On May 24, Hanson even went to Donald Richberg to fix it up for us. The thing was practically in the bag. And then what? Alas, there followed "certain unfortunate happenings." Taking Hanson at his word, General Johnson so far forgot himself as to issue an order giving the Guild what the Guild and the publishers both wanted, and he did this without Mr. Hanson's knowledge. Even this frightful piece of impertinence, however, this "slip," might have been forgiven. Johnson canceled the order the very next day. But what next? Read the tearful record and you will find that Johnson said: "By God, I will keep that promise if I have to split this code wide open." And Blackwell Smith said: "All you have to do is issue an executive order and give them ten days to object."

Treason! Treason!

In order to leave no mistake about it, Hanson explains that they were talking through their respective hats. But it was a slip for which the Guild was to pay. Just this little bit of trans-Fedora conversation on the part of two nobodies in the N.R.A. and the deal was off. The publishers were on their dignity.

"The daily newspaper code," says Hanson, "cannot be cracked wide open by any action of the N.R.A. not assented to by publishers who have subscribed to the code. *The gentlemen quoted have learned this.*"

So it was all to prove that the N.R.A. couldn't trifle with publishers that the Guild didn't get its man on the board. We are glad to know how it happened. . . .

JOHN EDDY, Executive Secretary,
New York City. American Newspaper Guild.

Textile Strikers' Relief

SIR: The Emergency Committee for Strikers' Relief appeals to you and your friends to furnish food, medical care and clothing to the families of the strikers, to the wives and children of the dead and wounded.

In the Deep South, where exploited workers seemed just a short time ago to be weary to the point of apathy, thousands of textile workers are today battling for their families and their unions. . . .

Frank J. Gorman, leader of the textile strike, has asked this Committee to help provide relief for the strikers. In many communities the promised aid from the Federal Emergency Relief Adminstration has not been forthcoming.

But the workers must eat today; they must be cared for immediately. We must not let them and their families picket the mills with hungry stomachs. Send funds at once to the Emergency Committee for Strikers' Relief, 112 East Nineteenth Street, New York City. . . . Old clothes can be used as never before. Send them to the Committee, too. But money is the great need.

NORMAN THOMAS, Chairman,
REINHOLD NIEBUHR, Treasurer,
JOHN HERLING, Executive Secretary,
New York City. Emergency Committee for Strikers' Relief.

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Texas Lights: VIII

CASTROVILLE

ONE OF the delights of Texas is the historical immediacy, as it were, that is apt almost anywhere to arise. In your own grandfather's time, and even later, events appear, primitive, pioneer, violent, fresh, lovely with the sharp rim of legend, harsh, or, above all, still held and still bright-lighted in the memories of the living. And so we have Castroville, twenty-five miles from San Antonio, with all that cosmopolitan hum of San Antonio, that West Point of Aviation. Castroville is a French town with a German flavor growing out of Texas soil. But at one period in its career Castroville did not hasten to offer the railroad bonus, and thus we are able to distinguish it from thousands of other American towns.

I was reminded of this as I read Mrs. Waugh's book, just out and how modestly so for such delightful reading.[1] I am reminded too all over again of that strange Texas vista. It is hard to imagine that some of the most legendary lights fall on Castroville not only within the recollection of anybody's grandfather but of his father also. It is not easy to imagine, for example, a last Indian raid so late, as it was at Castroville, as 1870. At that time savages came every day and food had to be provided for them.

The settlers were not molested for the first three years. At the end of that time Henri Castro entered into a treaty between his colony and the Comanches which placed them, officially, on friendly terms. But in 1846 white settlers, not Castrovillians, killed two or three Comanches and the blameless colonists were made to suffer. And the Lipan Indians, who had been friendly neighbors, were enraged by the death of one of their tribe at the hands of some discharged Texas ranger. It was now worse for the frontier settlers than it had been twenty years before, for during the intervening years the Indians had come into possession of the two things that made them sources of real danger: whiskey and firearms. Nicholus Haby, farmer and Indian killer, came one day upon the bodies of four people. The Abbé Domenech writes it all down: On Christmas Eve, 1846, the four had gone to cut wood and must have fallen asleep under a tree. The Indians surprised them and nailed the youngest to the earth with their arrows. Then the others awoke, there was a fight, if we are to judge by the lance twisted, the blood, the deeply trodden grass. Riding one day from D' Hanis, the Abbé came on seven dead Mexicans, their bodies stuck with arrows, scalped, mutilated; and soon afterward a naked woman, still showing signs of life, bound to a tree with three naked Mexicans at her feet, dead. Their bodies were gashed and stuck thick with arrows, and with their bloody hair her mouth was stuffed, where they had tried to make her eat a scalp.

In the same epoch, nevertheless, are gentler things. Father Dubuis, the first priest of Castroville, was held four times by the Indians, but they did him no harm, so gentle he was. And once on a Sunday sixty Lipans arrived in Castroville during High Mass. They gathered before the chapel, listening, charmed by the music, they imitated the movements of the congregation, naked savages in beads and feathers, before the immortal ritual. And one day, an Indian girl having come into the Castro house, they played for her some music on the piano. She listened with staring eyes, touched the wood of the instrument, examined it, as she began to laugh and cry.

There was also the other side. For instance, in 1870, when the Indians made their last raid on the Haby settlement, Mr. Haby himself, having had enough of Indians stealing horses, tied up some ponies to a little log house in his yard and took his place in a tree's shadow, with his gun full of buckshot. Of the three Indians that stole up, he shot only one, the others fled. He lay down beside the dead Indian in the hope that the others would return, but they did not. Next day people came to look at the dead man. There was an old gentleman stopping for the moment with Mr. Haby who had had a horse stolen by the Indians and in the pursuit that followed had found the horse dead, its entrails cut out. He had vowed, if he ever saw a dead Indian, he would cut his entrails out. As he was standing now by the corpse he suddenly jerked out a knife and ripped it open. Another man wanted the Indian's hair, which came down to the waist, thick and black. He did not like to take it himself, but a boy cut it off nicely, close to the skull, without scratching the skin, and presented the fine long hair to the man who wanted it. The body of the Indian was dragged two or three hundred yards from the house and left for the hogs to eat. Mrs. Haby would not eat hog meat for several years after. In 1870 that was.

Somehow, reading Mrs. Waugh's book, I am reminded of certain citizens, reviewers and authors in our midst, who are likely to speak of such an American matter, for example, as the Civil War as of the same import as some war of Cyrus or Thucydides. There are those for whom this is doubtless true; they came to America to reap what earlier men had sweated blood to sow. Such earlier men had had time to try out the ideas they thought of themselves as believing; they had lived by their beliefs. If, however, things have cost oneself, or one's father, nothing, one rattles on more easily about disposing of them, especially if one does not, in fact, have them anyhow. But how strangely, in the face of these debonair disposals, we read of how the Abbé Dubuis and his assistant in Castroville began in July building their house, moved in by August, and found typhus on them. The next morning neither of them appeared in the village. Neither was able to give a glass of water to the other. After two days their illness was known, people brought in beds; each morning a bucket of water was placed between them, and in the evening not a drop remained; such was their thirst. At the end of ten days Abbé Dubuis was better; "Let us confess for the last time," he said. The stronger of them would try to say mass and would carry the Holy Communion to the other. He judged himself the stronger, but, having robed himself, he was twice obliged to sit down during the Mass. Then he carried the *viatique* to his companion. On the eighteenth day they went out to choose the burial place for him who died first. On the twentieth they strolled a short distance, two walking corpses. They could not return to the house; the other lay down and died in such suffering that it was impossible to recognize his features.

STARK YOUNG.

[1] Castroville and Henry Castro, Empresario, by Julia Nott Waugh. San Antonio, Texas: Standard Printing Company. 101 pages. No price given.

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Spender and Auden[1]

THERE has been a great beating of drums and clashing of cymbals to announce these two poets; perhaps there has been more noise than is justified by their work so far. Neither Stephen Spender nor W. H. Auden has yet written a long poem that belongs with the English classics, even with those of the second rank. But they have done something else, something that seemed next door to the impossible: they have brought life and vigor into contemporary English poetry.

They appeared in a dead season when all the serious young men were trying to imitate T. S. Eliot and weren't quite bringing it off. Eliot himself, after writing "The Waste Land," had entered a territory that was supposed to be watered with springs of spiritual grace, but most travelers there found that the waters were subterranean and the soil brittle with drought. Reading his new poems was like excavating buried cities at the edge of the Syrian desert; they were full of imposing temples and perfectly proportioned statues of the gods, but there was nothing in the streets that breathed. Say this for Spender and Auden: they are living in an actual London; they walk over Scotch moors that are covered with genuine snow; they are not in the British Museum pressed and dried between the pages of a seventeenth-century book of sermons.

Still more important, they do not stand alone. They are merely the vanguard of a group that includes Charles Madge, John Lehmann, Cecil Day-Lewis (in some ways the most promising of all), Richard Goodman, Julian Bell and others. All of these poets are young, gifted in their various fashions, and seem to know what they are doing. All of them are able to write about political issues, not dryly or abstractly, but in terms of human beings. Most of them are radical without being proletarian. It is a matter of simple good sense that a proletarian poet ought to begin by being proletarian, just as a Catholic poet ought to be Catholic; otherwise he runs the risk of becoming as empty and affected as the hangers-on of the Oxford Movement. These young men, graduates of the English universities, don't pose for the newsreel men in the role of mechanics, dressed in greasy overalls; but nevertheless their sympathies are with the workers, and their sympathies have sharpened their perception of what is going on in the world around them. They are able to convey the sense of violence and uncertainty that we gulp down with the headlines of our morning papers, and of disaster waiting, perhaps, outside our doors.

So far Auden and Spender are the only members of the group whose work has appeared in this country (and incidentally their publisher deserves credit for giving them two handsome volumes). In a curious way they remind me of two recent American poets. Auden suggests E. E. Cummings: he has the same crazy wit, the same delight in playing with words and the same indifference to whether he is being understood. Spender suggests Hart Crane, more by a quality of outpouring emotion than by any specific mannerism. Auden, with his sharper tongue and quicker eyes, has more to teach his fellow poets, but Spender, on second reading, is the one I prefer.)

Let us call him a humanist. That is the best word I have found to describe the atmosphere of his poems, but it is a word so much abused that it has to be redefined. Spender's humanism has nothing to do with the shrill, bookish doctrine that was cricket-chirped by the followers of the late Irving Babbitt. It does not consist in advocating golden mediocrity or the Inner Check or the emendation of Greek manuscripts. It is a humanism not of the letter but of the spirit, and that spirit is simply, in Spender's words, "The palpable and obvious love of man for man." He isn't one of those poets who can write about people only after they are dead, only after our memories of them have been properly mellowed by time and forgetfulness, like port wine sent on a voyage round Cape Horn to ripen. Spender writes about living men, their laughter, their voices singing, the cities where they crowd and the great machines made by their hands. He writes too, but this time with loathing, about the institutions and abstractions that are turned against men: the Church, the press, the bankers' state, the columns of figures in ledgers and the people who profit by them, the ghosts prisoned in big houses:

> those ladies like flies perfect in amber
> those financiers like fossils of bones in coal.

In our generation we have seen human things increasingly subordinated to inhuman things, men to systems, writing and painting to principles of scholarship, tragedy to statistics, and even revolution to the quoting of texts about revolution. Spender calls back a note of human warmth into all this aridity. He is interested in politics, as nobody but an intellectual eunuch could fail to be in this age of ours, and there is no doubt which side he has chosen. When he speaks of Germany, for example, he is sure to mention

> the parliament their own side set afire
> and then our party forbidden.

He is explicit; he will fight with "our party," with the unemployed and the Communists, against "their side," the fascists and the money barons. But his reasons for choosing communism are human, not statistical. "Oh young men, oh comrades," he says—

> Oh comrades, step beautifully from the solid wall
> advance to rebuild and sleep with friend on hill
> advance to rebel and remember what you have
> no ghost ever had, immured in his hall.

Spender is serious, straightforward; he can use words like "love," "bravery," "honor," without having them turn mealy in his mouth. The most serious defect to be found in his poems is a sort of fogginess that sometimes makes his meaning doubtful. I think it comes from two principal sources. For one thing, his vision of the physical world is not clear enough and his images are not sufficiently precise. Too often he writes like a short-sighted man looking at distant mountains. But he is sometimes ambiguous for another reason—because he is honestly uncertain of his direction, and gropes. It is significant that his more recent work has been sharper and clearer. Spender is one of those poets who improve technically, in sonority and precision, as they become more radical.

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[1] Poems, by Stephen Spender. New York: Random House. 68 pages. $1.50

Poems, by W. H. Auden. New York: Random House. 218 pages. $2.50.

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W. H. Auden is a battle poet. His boyhood was spent among rumors of war, troop movements, lists of officers dead on the field of honor; his career as a poet belongs to the gray depression years. In his poems he has made a synthesis of these two adventures. The results of unemployment are projected forward into another war, this time a war between social classes fought against a background of decaying industrialism. He gives us a sense of skirmishes in the yards of abandoned factories, of railroads dynamited, ports silted up, high-tension wires fallen to the ground, of spies creeping out at night or stumbling back to drop dead of their wounds (it is curious how often he mentions spies) and always a sense of mystery, of danger waiting at the corner of two streets:

> But careful; back to our lines; it is unsafe there,
> Passports are issued no longer; that area is closed.

Along with this goes a sanguinary sort of wartime humor that is best illustrated in his burlesque account of a revolution in England. On the second day of fighting, "A white-faced survivor informs the prison governor that the convicts, loosed, storming the execution shed, are calculating the drop formula by practical experiment, employing warders of various weights." On the third day, famine attacks the upper classes—"For those who desire an honorable release, typhoid lice, three in a box, price twopence, are peddled in the streets by starving corner boys." There are pages of Auden that have the irresponsible savagery of the Dada Manifesto.

His principal fault, I think, is his damnable and perverse obscurity. Partly this is the result of his verse technique, of his habit of overusing alliteration and thus emphasizing the sound of words at the expense of what they signify. Partly it is the result of literary tradition—the famous tradition of "opacity" that Eliot and Pound did so much to spread, and the plain-reader-be-damned tradition that was part of Dadaism and Superrealism. There are times when Auden deliberately befogs his meaning, and other times when he obviously doesn't mean anything at all; he is setting down his perceptions for their value in themselves and if they don't fit together into a unified picture, well, so much the worse for the reader. But there is another reason for his obscurity, a psychological reason having to do with his own position in that class war about which he is always writing. By birth and training Auden belongs with the exploiters. When he says "we," the people to whom he refers are the golf-playing, every-morning-bathing, tea-at-the-rector's-taking type of Britons. When he says "they," he is thinking of the workers; but he admires "them" and despises "us." He believes that his own class is decaying from within, is destined to be overthrown, and he looks forward to this event with happy anticipation:

> If we really want to live, we'd better start at once to try;
> If we don't, it doesn't matter, but we'd better start to die.

And that, I think, is the principal source of his ambiguity: he regards himself as a class traitor, a spy, a Copperhead. For this reason he is forced to speak in parables, to use code words like a conspirator in a Vienna cafe who wants to deliver a message but knows that the bulls are listening. He is on his guard, wary—till suddenly he gets tired of being cautious and blurts out a condemnation of everything he hates. I like him best when he is least self-protective.

What shall we say of both these poets? They have a good many obvious faults, their appeal is partly a snob appeal (and this is true of Auden in particular), but there is life in them always, and reading them is a stimulating experience. They are opening up a new territory. The best of them is the feeling that they will call forth other poets, not merely to follow in their footsteps, but perhaps to go beyond.

MALCOLM COWLEY.

Extreme Unction

The Method of Freedom, by Walter Lippmann. New York: The Macmillan Company. 131 pages. $1.50.

IN THIS little book, Mr. Lippmann displays to the full that effortless magic of style which has made his audience a wider one than any other addressed by an American publicist since the time of Henry George. As a tour de force, his book is remarkable. For he has managed, with consummate adroitness, to touch all the burning issues of the time, to speak words of comfort about them to all who are distressed for their property, and yet to evade all the vital questions to which a serious student of politics must want the answer.

His thesis is quite simple. Laissez-faire is no longer a working conception of life now that universal suffrage has conferred political power on the masses. Conversely, authoritarian regimes are fatal to spiritual well-being. The time, therefore, has come for the state to enter the economic sphere as a high arbitrator, to plan its functioning as a whole, and see that the ship of state keeps on an even keel. This, which Mr. Lippmann calls the method of compensated economy, will enable liberty to be preserved. It means making public works the heart of state policy, and it involves economic security for the masses. Probably it involves entrusting the economic policy of the state to a small body of officials comparable to the Supreme Court in status and independence. Probably, also, it is workable only among the free nations with a highly developed capitalist economy, like Great Britain, the United States and Scandinavia. The whole issue is removed from the realm of principle to that of expediency; but Mr. Lippmann seems confident that this is the drift of events.

Mr. Lippmann raises so many questions he does not discuss that it is difficult even to enumerate the issues he passes by. The confusion between the planned economy of Russia and the police-state of Italy and Germany; the failure to relate the "freedom" of the free states to the development of their wealth; the entire absence even of an attempt to prove that a state can remain neutral in a system where the instruments of production remain in private hands; the failure to realize that the judicial independence of the Supreme Court has not prevented it from being an essential instrument of capitalism; the absence of any discussion of the relations between fascism and capitalism in distress; the belief that the method of persuasion is defined by territorial considerations; the simple faith that, when all economic groups make their interests political questions, the state can somehow transcend their selfishness; the relation of contemporary capitalism, with its inherent need for ever wider markets, to war; the implied acceptance of the middle class as the natural repository of the libertarian virtues; the importance of Wall Street's hostility to the New Deal; the fact that, beneath differences of national tradition, the needs of capitalist states push all of them in the same direction—all of this, which is the very pith of Mr. Lippmann's problem, is not even discussed. His conclusion amounts to saying that, in certain countries, capitalism can survive if the capitalists will agree to make reasonable concessions to the workers at times of economic stress; and he thinks, further, that it can survive in the

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peculiar democratic form we have known this last sixty or seventy years if the state is made the organ through which those concessions are obtained.

Mr. Lippmann, in short, thinks that if the New Deal is successful, capitalist democracy will survive. What one would have liked from him is the book he has been careful not to write. That book is a study of the forces at work in contemporary society which, by threatening property, threaten the security that has so far been the necessary condition of the kind of tolerance we have known. From what he has written, Mr. Lippmann emerges as a good conservative in the manner of Burke, acutely conscious of the good achieved by the old order, a little aloofly compassionate with the suffering it involves, fearful of any experimentation with the basic ideas of our society. He does not show us how his principles can take the offensive. He faces the posture of things with ideas that belong emphatically to the era of Wilsonian democracy. He does not discuss the implications of their breakdown either in the national or the international field. He does not discuss, even, the relation of his prudent conservatism to the habits of capitalism as revealed by events in San Francisco or Minneapolis or New Jersey. He gives us no reflections upon the events of February in Paris, or the significance of the National Government in England. Everyone can see that dictatorship can be avoided where capitalist democracy makes continual concessions to the masses; that is not a profound discovery of social truth. But what I should have liked from Mr. Lippmann is the proof that a policy of continuing concessions is one in which capitalists will acquiesce, whatever the cost to themselves. By evading that issue he has evaded his real problem. The result is rather a prayer than a serious diagnosis.

HAROLD J. LASKI.

While the Fields Burn

Now in November, by Josephine Johnson. New York: Simon and Schuster. $2.

IN ADMITTING a love for "the little things" and a temperament that finds "salamanders and fungus . . . more exciting than war," Miss Johnson admits the chief limitations to her remarkable talent. Unlike many writers of her disposition, she has chosen no fantasy for theme. The story is one of ten years' hardship on a Missouri farm culminating in a drought. Beginning with childhood, spring and luxuriance, the narrative moves to suppressed love, fear, death by violence. But no catastrophe finds the narrator wanting for an apt and beautiful comment on the profit and the loss, no violence distracts her from her chosen love of the little things. When Kerrin, the eldest daughter of the farmer's family, is driven into insanity and suicide, the scene is viewed from some great distance. When fire breaks out, taking the few crops that have been spared by the sun, and when the mother dies, half-crazed with the pain of burns, the distance is preserved, the narrator's tranquility goes unbroken. This is surely the most composed book that has ever come out of Missouri.

In order to achieve such composure, Miss Johnson has necessarily sacrificed a degree of reality. All this might have occurred in another century, you feel, on another continent, so mellifluous and easy is the tone. A too frequent use of the words "love" and "death," a too frequent listing of the things that survive time, has made them sound hollow. With a drought still fresh in your mind you may lose patience with Miss Johnson for observing the sala-

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manders while the fields are burning. But in this case you are asking her to take a part she has clearly declined.

Once these difficulties are overlooked, the accomplishment is impressive. From a din that has been raging for several years she has lifted a quiet, modulated feminine voice. There are no faults of the sort that characterize the first novels of even the greatest writers as being the first. There is no trace here of the novice, of derivation, of irregularity; here is talent full blown at twenty-four, fragile and, in its way, nearly perfect. JON CHEEVER.

Portrait of a Gentleman

Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson, by E. M. Forster. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 291 pages. $3.

IN HIS epilogue Mr. Forster raises the question why a biography of Lowes Dickinson should be written, to which his first answer is all-sufficient—"Because I want to." He dismisses the claim that his hero was great as a writer, as a thinker, or as contributing greatly to the future of humanity. He was, on the other hand, a combination of qualities that belong to humanity at its best, and "these qualities were fused into such an unusual creature that no one whom one has met with in the flesh or in history the least resembles it, and no words exist in which to define it." Mr. Forster possesses unusual qualifications for his task. He is a novelist of peculiar gift in scenting the rare, strange, elusive traits of personality. An undergraduate at King's College, Cambridge, he knew Lowes Dickinson when the latter was coming into his years of distinction in the University, and of intellectual influence upon his pupils. Later he traveled with Dickinson in India. He knew Dickinson's friends, so that his own impressions are reënforced and corrected by others, and of course he has had access to correspondence. Nevertheless Mr. Forster confesses failure to "achieve the unattainable, express the inexpressible, turn the passing into the everlasting." "Perhaps," he wistfully surmises, "it only could be done through music."

It is clear that Mr. Forster has contemplated a biography of an unusual kind, one of personal portrayal like the lovely portraits of seventeenth-century worthies in Walton's "Lives." Such a biography, "if it succeeded, would resemble him." And one has a feeling that, in spite of his disclaimers, Mr. Forster as portrait artist has caught the likeness. His very self-consciousness, deprecation, evasion, his tentative approach and uncertain strokes, seem to constitute a manner curiously befitting the subject. Above all, Mr. Forster has painted Lowes Dickinson against the background of Cambridge, of King's College, in the late mellow afternoon of the Victorian Age. If he is dissatisfied with the features, he has triumphed in the atmosphere.

Dickinson was born in 1862. He had the usual painful and unprofitable experience of sensitive boys in English schools, and entrance to Cambridge was like transplantation from a shadowed sterile courtyard into a sunny garden plot. He was elected fellow of King's College, which remained the center of his career. The academic scene of Cambridge, its college architecture only partly spoiled, "the backs," the conversational stimulus of clubs and common rooms, the intimacy and warmth of personal association—these Dickinson enjoyed to the full through his serene and happy life. Intellectually he was the perfect English gentleman. His interests were philosophy, literature, music, history, politics, but he was a specialist in none of them. To him mind was more than the matter with which it dealt, and the play of mind was what he enjoyed in association and correspondence with as wide and stimulating a circle of friends as any man of his generation possessed. To gather the richness of the past and the present, to taste and enjoy the finest things, to absorb them into his own personality was Dickinson's gift. "I had no overmastering impulse at all," he wrote, "only a wide range of sensitiveness."

And this gift Dickinson shared with others, first of all with his undergraduate charges at King's, then with university extension classes, finally with popular radio audiences. He regretted the limitation of his personal experience that held him aloof from intimate knowledge of the mass of mankind. The War was the occasion of his brief public career, which took the form of strenuous advocacy of the League of Nations. It is tragic to read today the beautifully cogent arguments that he put forth, seeking to make reason prevail in a world given over to force and chicane. They are the last utterances of that nineteenth-century liberalism with its noble faith in the application of intelligence to the affairs of men. He saw clearly, however, that the necessary condition for the operation of intelligence was good will. "Does that good will exist?" he asked in 1917. The test would be the peace. "Make a wrong peace, one that involves a perpetuation of the European anarchy and a preparation even more intense for an even more terrible war in the near future, and nothing that may be done or attempted later will be able to effect salvation." He lived to see a wrong peace made, and the League of Nations come into being as a mask for the European anarchy he lamented. He died in August, 1932, a month before its pretensions were finally exploded.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

Life Before Birth

Embryology and Genetics, by Thomas Hunt Morgan. New York: Columbia University Press. 258 pages, illustrated. $3.

DR. MORGAN needs no introduction to students of the biological sciences throughout the world. In his chosen field, Genetics, he has during the last thirty years produced a body of work whose scientific value and social significance are only partially rewarded by his inclusion among the ranks of Nobel prize winners. The present volume represents his effort to tell one of the most obscure and fascinating stories in the whole repertory of nature: the story of life before the moment of official "birth." Embryology, for so long a purely descriptive science with but the vaguest theories as to the actual mechanism of development, acquired a new vitality through the dynamic concepts of segregation, assortment and particulate inheritance first formulated by the Moravian monk, Gregor Mendel. Subsequently, and paralleling the development of Biochemistry, it was recognized that the egg, of whatever species, constituted a physico-chemical unit of astounding complexity, and the problem inevitably narrowed to the search for *constants* to whose behavior in this unit individual, as well as species, characteristics could be traced. Thus, eventually, we discovered the chromosomes and inferred the genes: and it is with both of these epoch-making factors that Dr. Morgan has been so long and so brilliantly associated. In this volume he tells us something of what he and other scientists have learned regarding the "developmental mechanics" of life-forms before they reach the threshold of birth. "The egg," he writes, "is a cell set to go along a known path"; drawing upon his enormous fund of knowl-

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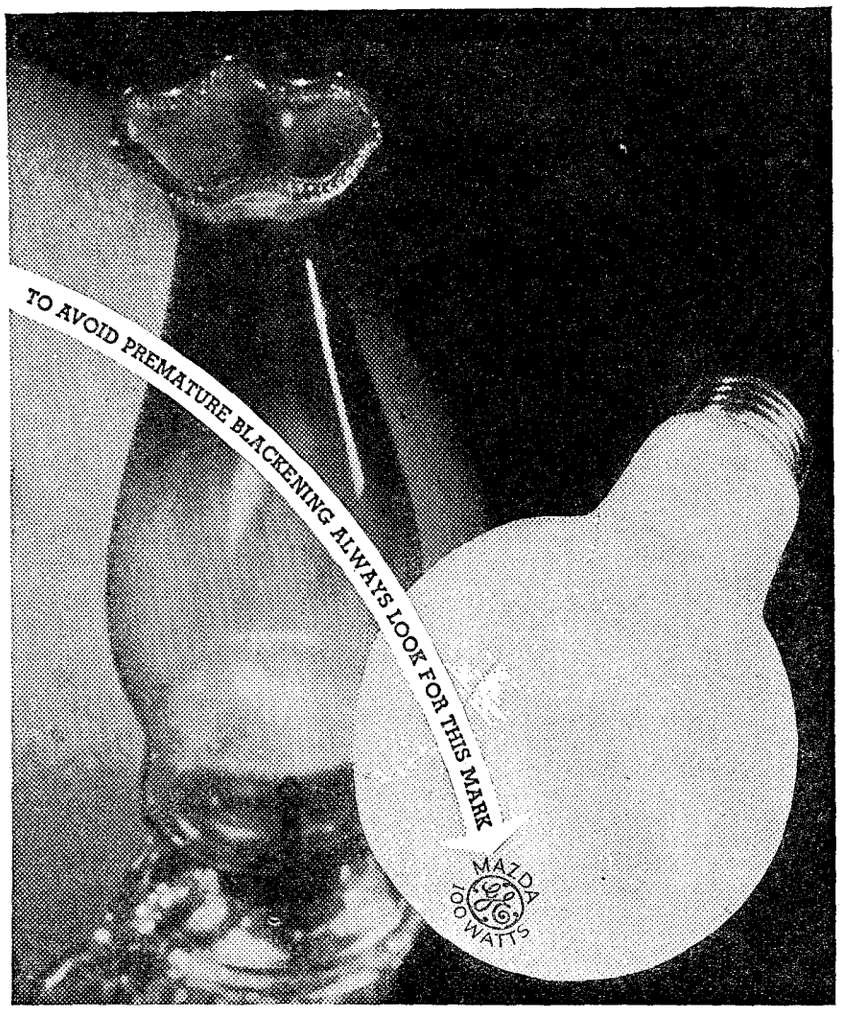

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edge, and in a style that is a model of scientific propriety, he tries to illumine the two fundamental problems implied by that statement: what "sets" the egg to go, and what is the mechanism holding it, through an infinitude of storms and dangers within and without, to its "known" course?

HAROLD WARD.

Novels in Brief

Full Flavor, by Doris Leslie. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

ALTHOUGH Catherine Ducrox was born in London, back in 1848, by 1866 she was beseeching God, "Whether I marry or whether I don't let me *make* something of my life." When her whimsical father died a few weeks later, calling her with his last breath *"my son,"* she stifled her desolation by taking charge of his bankrupt tobacco shop and transforming it into a prosperous business —mainly by looking "small" and "childish" and opposing vehemently every suggestion made to her by a man. She also drove one husband to drink and the voluptuous arms of his stepsister, but eventually she got another, who could sell cigarettes as fast as she; and so she lived to be a dear old lady, thankful that England entered the World War and horrified because her grandson almost married an American. In the meanwhile she encountered every celebrity during sixty-six years, from "Dizzy" to Oscar Wilde. If you can imagine "Calvalcade" novelized by a literate Faith Baldwin and a naïve Radclyffe Hall, you can imagine the full flavor of this chronicle. G. A.

No Man Is Single, by Stuart Hawkins. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. $2.50.

The scenes of this novel, except for brief interludes in France, are laid in the New York of the 1890's and early 1900's. The hero, Aspen Trumbull, stands for different things to the three people nearest to him, and the story is really three stories, told from their conflicting points of view. To his father, who wishes the son had followed in his footsteps instead of becoming an artist, Aspen is a weakling; to his wife, Hannah, he is a dependable refuge; to Helene, a French girl who goes on loving him though she has married another, he is more capable of extracting beauty from life than anyone else she has ever known. Each of them thinks that Aspen is a little odd, and charming; but the final sum of the three portraits may or may not represent the complete man. The author writes with pleasant restraint, simply and persuasively, and seems to have successfully recaptured the mood of an age that we are beginning to forget. J. C.

All the Skeletons in All the Closets, by Keith Fowler. New York: The Macaulay Company. $2.50.

As a clinical study of the rise, happy days and fall of the scandal-sheet "editors" who are its somewhat villainous heroes, Mr. Fowler's novel would be very all right, if it were a clinical study. It is not, though. Kiser and Ragan and Tracy Mull blackmail, coax and strongarm; and the Boys in the Boiler Room put what they would call the bite on whoever will stand for it, and Chummley stays drunk and puts together a slick job of printing month by month, and in short there is built up a good picture of the workings of The Social Arbiter, a racket if there ever was one. But the nice loose realism of the thing becomes more and more out of place as the author gradually shows his medals and the heroes of the story turn out to be good-hearted

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Irish ward bosses and sturdy brokers, and the plot gets increasingly thick with familiar romance. The author has a fine flair for dialogue, which comes ripping out all the way through; but his exposition is very heavy and amateurish, a style whose purple is not neutralized by even the most constant straining after cheap wisecracks. Make up your mind, is what I say: you can't be James M. Cain and Little Orphan Annie both. O. F.

Bitter Bread, by Nikolai Gubsky. New York: Henry Holt and Company. $2.

This novel has the sting of a Chekhov play. The author creates a striking situation by placing his main character, who is Russian in temperament, in an English town that is dismally bourgeois. Göring was half-English and half-Russian, but his philosophy and his emotions were those of a pre-Revolution intellectual. He scorned material success; he could not tolerate his neighbors because he found their ways and their talk petty. He derived consolation only from his love for his wife, and from one or two Personal Relationships. The loss of his job makes his isolation more tragic. The Personal Relationships are tucked away into bourgeois pigeon-holes; his poverty begins to affect his relationship with his wife. When in desperation he turns to communism, he loses her altogether. As a last hope he makes plans to go to Russia and find work there, but suspicious Soviet officials turn him down. As in some of Chekhov's plays, one cannot dissociate the artistry and the emotional depth of "Bitter Bread" from its powerful social implications. J. M.

Dark Angel, by Gina Kaus. Translated from the German, by Eden and Cedar Paul. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.

Gina Kaus's name has become popular in connection with a certain type of entertainment novel. Like her predecessors in the field, Vicki Baum and Jo Van Ammers-Küller, she sticks to a formula that seems to please a portion of the reading public: a dash of passion, two jiggers of spiritual love, a sprinkle of slight humor—add slices of feminism and so forth. Wagner, a young architect, convalescing behind the Austrian front in 1918, gets engaged to Irene, the daughter of a Vienna jeweler. Subsequently he also falls in love with Irene's sister, Lottie. He marries the first and, before leaving for the front, has a secret affair with the second. Eventually, Irene has a miscarriage and Lottie gives birth to a boy, whom the sisters palm off as Irene's baby. "Her wings broken," Lottie becomes an actress. When after many years she visits her sister, she is refused permission to take the boy away with her for a few weeks. Upon Lottie's angry disclosure that the child is hers, there follows an attempted suicide by Irene, Lottie's death by accident and Wagner's divorce. The author of "Luxury Liner" has again turned out a first-rate third rater, ably translated by the Pauls.

B. F.

Years Are So Long, by Josephine Lawrence. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company. $2.50.

For some time The Newark Sunday Call, on which Miss Lawrence is employed, has conducted a legal department that receives many of these questions: Do I have to support my parents? Can my children be compelled to support me? "Years Are So Long" lends the emphasis of fiction to the problem. Father Cooper has lost the position he has held for forty-seven years. Times are too bad for an old man

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to find a new job, even if he wanted to; and besides, both Father and Mother Cooper believe it the pleasure and duty of their children to care for them in their homes. But when poverty pinches, family feeling takes a holiday. The five children, all struggling to keep their own heads above water, grudgingly divide the old people among them—except for the daughter in California. At the death of her father, she sends money for Mother Cooper's keep in the dreaded Old Ladies Home. Against the protests of the old people that they had been glad, in their youth, to care for their own aged parents, the children point out that times have changed. In those days spacious homes provided tasks for the aged that left them an integral fiber of the family economy; the cramp and stress of today make them useless appendices dangerous to the lives of the young. The book has faults of writing and characterization; there is less tact and more selfishness to pass around among the Cooper family than seems normal; but Miss Lawrence's courage in bringing out into the open a delicate problem that has grown out of our social insecurity gives the book an importance beyond its literary value. B. E. B.

A Correction

In Mr. Ferguson's article in The New Republic of September 12, "British Agent" was ascribed to Paramount. The film is a Warner Brothers production.

Contributors

PAUL KEATING, newspaper man and free-lance writer in Chicago and Washington, has recently been doing editorial work for The American Observer of Washington. He has been attending the hearings in the "Morro Castle" inquiry.

JONATHAN MITCHELL, former foreign correspondent and author of "Goose Steps to Peace," is at present living in Washington.

MARY K. SIMKHOVITCH, director of Greenwich House and president of the National Public Housing Conference, is vice-chairman of the New York Municipal Housing Authority.

JULIAN BELL is a member of the younger group of English poets discussed by Malcolm Cowley in this issue.

HAROLD J. LASKI is the author of numerous studies of economics and polities, including "The Foundations of Sovereignty and Other Essays." His most recent work is "Democracy in Crisis."

JON CHEEVER, whose work was first published in The New Republic, has since contributed to The Hound and Horn and other magazines. He is now at Yaddo writing short stories and working on a first novel.

HAROLD WARD writes regularly on "The Sciences and Society" for The Living Age.

The initials signed to the brief reviews are those of *Grace Adams, John Cournos, Otis Ferguson, Jerre* Mangione, Barthold Fles and Beatrice E. Bettinger.

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